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# **A Hundred Years of Caring**

*The Story of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc.*

**1885-1985**







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**1885-1985**

Alan Keith-Lucas

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# **Appreciation**

This book is being published through a grant from the Broyhill Foundation. Printing consultation was provided by Joseph F. Phelps, retired President of Edwards and Broughton Company and an alumnus of the Baptist Children's Homes, where he was introduced to the printing trade.



# Foreward

If the past is prologue to the future, then the second century of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina should be in good hands. Since 1885, Baptist Children's Homes has built a solid reputation of quality child care that few such Homes can equal.

There have been times of great difficulty over these first one hundred years. But the rewards have always exceeded the setbacks. We have survived enormous changes in the fundamental nature of child care. Dedicated staff, able trustees, and competent chief executives have made certain that the Baptist Children's Homes responded positively to these changes.

In many ways, Baptist Children's Homes has been a reflection of those men who have served as the chief executive officers. As the eighth such leader, I seldom experience a day when I don't think about the seven men who preceded me: Mills, Boone, Kesler, Greer, Wall, Reed, Wagoner. With the exception of Dr. Wall, who only served two years, all of these men served substantial amounts of time at the helm of leadership.

When I assumed the Baptist Children's Homes' presidency on July 1, 1983, I knew that the most pressing thing was to 'gear up' for the centennial. This was an exacting and demanding challenge. But thanks to an excellent staff and a superb Board, we became equal to the task.

The idea of an updated history quickly etched itself in my mind. Although I had never met Alan Keith-Lucas until the night I asked him to write the new history, I knew instinctively that he was the right man for the task.

I have asked Dr. Keith-Lucas, because of his intimate knowledge of the Baptist Children's Homes, to 'tell it like it is.' I believe he has accomplished this task.

Dr. Keith-Lucas is unsurpassed in the field of child care. He is a friend of children and of children's homes. He has never stopped growing as a professional, though at this writing he is seventy-five years of age. One of the joys of our centennial year is that once again Baptist Children's Homes has asked Dr. Keith-Lucas to work with staff members on each of our four group care campuses. Both Baptist Children's Homes and Dr. Keith-Lucas himself welcome this renewed teaching-learning arrangement.

I hope you will enjoy reading the history of this great ministry. Only God's blessings could have made possible the glories of our first one hundred years. And only God can make possible the glories of the next century.

Michael C. Blackwell, President  
Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina  
March 1985



# Preface

There have been two previous narrative histories of Mills Home and the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. The first, *The Mills Home*, by the Dr. Bernard Washington Spilman, covers the years from 1885 to 1932. It is a detailed account of the affairs of the Home from the point of view of the Board of Trustees and the politics of the church, contains hundreds of names of trustees, benefactors and others, but lacks an index, which would have greatly added to its usefulness. It was reprinted in 1976, and I recommend it to those who wish to understand exactly who proposed this or that, or what churches took what particular action at any particular time, although it contains some inconsistencies — Dr. Spilman has at least two buildings built at two different times. I have made liberal use of it in trying to understand what really happened in those early years.

Dr. Spilman was a founder of the Southern Baptist Assembly at Ridgecrest and its President until 1933, and also General Field Secretary of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and later Field Secretary to Educational Institutions. For twelve years he was President of the Orphanage's Board of Trustees. His book contains a number of humorous or touching episodes, but these are mostly of adult, rather than children's doings. This is, I think, a pity, since Dr. Spilman had many contacts with children. He lived for a number of years with twelve girls in a cottage on the Kennedy Home campus that he had financed himself, married one of the housemothers and was famous among the children for the stories that he told them. He did however leave a diary for the years 1936 to 1940, which will be described in more detail later.

Weston Reed's book, *Love in Action*, brings the story up to 1970. Again, it is largely a story of Board actions, benefactors and buildings. It is enlivened by many excellent pictures, a number of which I have reproduced. It contains thumbnail sketches of the careers of 96 Board members and 39 other significant persons, as well as a list of major benefactors, buildings and a list of 1,044 staff members who served between 1932 and 1970. There is a short chapter on the children and their church, school, and cottage life, some of it written by Mrs. Reed, but unfortunately again, there is no index. Mr. Reed was working on this history to within an hour of the heart-attack that caused his death one day later.

There are also four delightful collections of photographs of people and buildings, including many individual children,

and with a short history of Mills Home, arranged by Franklin Bailey and published by the Mills Home Alumni Association between 1979 and 1983. Each of the four volumes covers twenty-five years.

It might seem therefore as if another history was not needed. What I have tried to do, however, is to write what I hope is a readable, one-volume factual history of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, not as detailed as those of Dr. Spilman and Mr. Reed, but at the same time recording important events and people, as well as trends in the child care field. I have also brought it up to date, so that it covers the full hundred years of the Homes' existence. In doing so I have made wide use of the six books mentioned, above, also Dr. A. E. Fink's unpublished manuscript, *Orphanhood & Orphanage in the Carolinas, 1790-1950*, as well as Minutes of the Board of Trustees, Annual Reports, *Charity and Children*, reports of studies, statistics provided by the Homes, publicity materials, some reminiscences both of my own and others and some miscellaneous material, such as Dr. Spilman's diary.

While I have tried to be objective, inevitably I have had to make some personal judgments and for these I accept full responsibility. They are in no way official and I hope that I have in no way misrepresented anyone or given them less than their due. A history should not be a paean of uncritical praise; that there have been many glorious things done and very few bad ones to record is in the nature of the material and not an indication of my bias, which does exist, in favor of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, to which I owe much and value highly.

My own acquaintance with the work began in 1949 when I took part in the Chapel Hill Workshops for Institutional Personnel and first met Mr. and Mrs. Reed and Dr. Greer. Two years later I became director of the workshops, but it was not until 1954 that the University of North Carolina established a consultant service to children's homes and I began to pay official visits to Mills Home. Thereafter I visited the Home for at least five days each year for the next twenty-three years, at first as a provider of staff training but later more as a consultant on policies and procedures.

At one time I gave two days each month to the affairs of the Home, and from 1970 to 1978 was listed as a staff member (Consultant on Child Care) in each year's annual report. My wife and I were also "stand-by" foster parents for the Homes for a short time in the late sixties. On one occasion my whole

family spent a week-end on the Mills Home campus, my wife and I staying with the Reeds and my children being placed in a girls' and boys' cottage, respectively, where my son helped a group of boys "short-sheet" the housemother's bed, and should have been spanked but wasn't.

I also consulted a number of times with the staff at Kennedy Home and on one occasion at least visited Broyhill Home, the maternity home in Asheville, the Wall Home and Odum Home respectively. I also taught at the School of Social Work numbers of the Home's social workers, seven of whom were among the four students I accepted each year in a special sequence for administrators. I am proud to be mentioned several times, and even to have a picture, in Mr. Reed's book. For the last five or six years, however, the Baptist Children's Homes has not felt the need for consultation from Group Child Care Consultant Services and, except for a two-day institute at Broyhill Home in 1980, I have seen little of the program. But at the meeting of the Southern Baptist Child Care Executives in Williamsburg in April, 1984, Dr. Blackwell suggested to me that I undertake this work. I was exceedingly glad to do so and to be again a very small part of the on-going saga of Baptist Child Care in North Carolina.

I owe thanks to a number of people who have helped me in this work: to Dr. Blackwell, both for his invitation to write

the book and the material he gave me about the Homes' projected future; to Robert Stump, who served as coordinator of the project and made many resources available; to Bill and Louise Sisk, both for their hospitality at the Family Resource Center and for their information on past staff members; to F. T. Bowman, both for compiling financial information and for entrusting me with several extremely precious minute-books; to the Alumni Association for sharing valuable photographs; to Catherine Higgins, Terri Stump, Donna Myers, and Mary Ellen Walker for their typing of a much overwritten manuscript; to Phyllis Stump for proofreading; and others who have had some part in the book's production.

Less directly but just as warmly I would like to thank, some of them posthumously, Dr. I. G. Greer, Mr. W. C. Reed, Dr. W. R. Wagoner, their wives, the various superintendents, social workers, child care workers (hundreds of them), secretaries, other workers and children (thousands of them) whom I have counted as my friends over the years that have helped me in my admittedly inadequate understanding of the spirit of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

Alan Keith-Lucas  
Chapel Hill  
March, 1985

# Beginnings

The founding of most denominational orphanages in the South, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, followed what was almost a prescribed pattern.

The need was most certainly there. The toll of the War Between the States, both in lives and property, and the turbulence of the Reconstruction Era, had left many children orphaned or destitute. If no one came to their rescue they were either herded into almshouses or poor farms, along with the sick, the senile, petty criminals and the insane, or they became "little wanderers," living from hand to mouth or by thievery and prostitution. There were, of course, private attempts to help them. Many families would take in a promising orphan to rear. Some churches supported small and usually ephemeral institutions, often privately managed. Even states recognized the need. The 1868 Constitution of North Carolina provides that there shall be "as soon as practicable, measures devised by the state for the establishment of one or more orphan houses, where destitute orphans may be cared for, educated and taught some business or trade."

However, in the economic chaos of that time, "as soon as practicable" generally meant "never." Sooner or later, state religious Conventions, Synods or Conferences began to be challenged, often by some minister who was sensitive to the problem, to establish an orphanage. Sometimes the matter had been debated in a church paper for some time. James 1:27 was a favorite text supporting the establishment of such homes.

The church body in question, sometimes stimulated by friendly interdenominational rivalry — "the Wesleyans or the Prelaticalists (Episcopalians) have established one and I think we ought to, too" — generally took the step of appointing a committee to explore the need, to sound out the likelihood of support from its constituent members, and to report its findings the next year. This being generally favorable, the committee was charged with selecting a site from a number of offers from churches, townships or individuals. A site having been selected, a Board of Trustees was elected and they in turn chose a superintendent, either from among their number or from the ministry elsewhere. The process was orderly and amicable, the only demurrers coming from those who believed the church not to be ready to undertake so large a drain on its resources at this particular time.

Such, indeed was the process which gave birth to Connie Maxwell Orphanage in South Carolina, the Virginia Baptist Children's Home (often referred to as "the Synodical Or-

phanage"), Barium Springs Presbyterian Orphan Home, and many others.

But it was not like that among North Carolina Baptists. Mills Home, the first Baptist orphanage in the State, was founded in the midst of bitter controversy by an unofficial organization, the North Carolina Baptist Orphanage Association, not only without the blessing of the Baptist State Convention, but, it appears, contrary to its wishes. It, and its founders, were attacked on all sides. Not only Baptists opposed its founding. It is reported that every newspaper in the State except two opposed its establishment, and an Episcopalian paper labelled its proponents "a gang of bigoted, narrow-minded sectarians."

There were, apparently, three grounds on which Baptists opposed the orphanage, although only the third would seem to be capable of raising such a storm of controversy, vituperation, protest and actual disorder in the State Convention and some Association meetings as actually ensued. One was quite naturally the cost. The second was the existence of the Oxford Masonic Orphanage, in the founding and management of which many prominent Baptists had been involved, and through which many Baptists satisfied themselves that they were serving orphan children, although, as a proponent said, the Oxford Orphanage was only taking care of a minuscule proportion of the orphans in need of care. The third was the conviction on the part of many Baptists who leaned towards the Primitive or Hardshell doctrine that the church should not become involved in what was seen as missionary work.

There may have been personality problems and some resentment against the tactics of the orphanage proponents, which, in good Baptist fashion, have been conveniently glossed over in official reports or were never formally expressed. The history is a strange one. The real push for the orphanage came at the time that John H. Mills resigned as superintendent of the Masonic Orphanage and thus was available both to lead the campaign for a new orphanage and to be its first manager. There was even some suggestion that he might have been encouraged to make this change.

John Haymes Mills was a remarkable character. Born in 1831 in Halifax County, Virginia, the son of a Baptist minister and farmer who had himself taken an orphan boy to rear, he was a graduate of Wake Forest and a brilliant student. In person he was, for that time, enormous, standing six foot two, very hale and hearty, and in middle life described as "cor-



John Haymes Mills, First General Manager, 1885-1895.

pulent" — one source says that at one time he weighed 375 pounds, and was almost as broad as he was tall. He was also extremely strong-willed.

On becoming President and owner of the Oxford Female Seminary four years after joining its faculty, fresh from college, as professor of mathematics, his first action was to dismiss the Seminary's Board of Trustees and assume sole control. It was for the same reason that, officially at least, he resigned from the superintendency of Oxford Orphanage. The Grand Lodge of North Carolina Ancient Free and Accepted Masons elected a Board of Trustees over his head. His letter of resignation complains that the Trustees did not consult him on important matters, made hasty and unworkable decisions and caused him to be "a public target for the wicked and malicious."

He maintained the Female Seminary throughout the difficult years of the War, and moved it in 1866 into the abandoned

buildings of St. John's College, which had been maintained by the Masons. In 1867, however, he bought the *Biblical Recorder* and moved to Raleigh. In the meantime, in his own words, "the orphanage idea had begun to scratch my skull" and eventually "bored a hole in it." The buildings of St. John's College were by now empty again, and in 1872 Mr. Mills proposed to the Grand Lodge that they be used for an orphanage. There was a heated debate — Mr. Mills was a powerful debater — and the result was a tie vote. The Grand Master, John Nichols, cast the deciding vote, Oxford Orphanage was established, and Mr. Mills was elected its first superintendent. He served for more than eleven years until his resignation early in 1884. Mr. Mills then moved to Davidson County, three miles west of Thomasville, where he purchased a farm and intended to open a school for boys.

The Lord had other plans. There was a group of prominent Baptists who believed that the Baptists should have their own orphanage. These included Dr. R. D. Fleming of Warrenton, a dentist, who attracted the attention of his pastor by refusing to contribute any longer to the orphanage at Oxford on the grounds that the Baptists should have an orphanage of their own, and was persuaded to start a series of letters and articles in the *Biblical Recorder*. Others who had the same idea were W. R. Gwaltney, John C. Scarborough, Dr. J. D. Hufham, President Charles E. Taylor of Wake Forest College, and Dr. Columbus Durham.

The matter came up for what proved to be extremely acrimonious debate at the 1884 Baptist State Convention, and when it became apparent that there could be no resolution of the problem, the opponents of the orphanage, employing filibustering and other delaying tactics, moved adjournment of the Convention. Those present, all those named above with the exception of Dr. Durham, and in addition W. B. Clement, George W. Greene, R. R. Overby, and E. Frost, then met in the pastor's study of the First Baptist Church of Raleigh and formed the North Carolina Baptist Orphanage Association to do what the Convention would not. Sixty-eight other delegates joined them the next day, paying a dollar apiece for the privilege, and Mr. Mills, who had been asked to join them, was unanimously elected General Manager of the orphanage to be.

Its original purpose, as outlined in its first constitution was to be "to prepare promising orphans for the duties and responsibilities of life, and special care shall be taken to help the most needy." There are two ideas in this statement. The first, to care for the most promising and only those was in some ways a necessity. There was space and funds only for a small proportion of all the orphans in the state, and it made sense

to concentrate on those who could use the service best. But this concept led only too often to serving only the "good" child who had the least need for the training the orphanage could give. The command to serve the most needy is what eventually helped to establish children's homes as truly redemptive agencies.



Mary Presson Yarbro (seated) was the first child admitted to the orphanage on November 11, 1885. With her is Jacqueline Greer, who was admitted to the orphanage in December, 1938.

The Association had at that time less than \$100 in hand and did not own a foot of land. Yet by the time of the next State Convention, a year and a week later, Mr. Mills was welcoming the first student at the new orphanage at Paradise Hill, the site of many a Negro revival, near Thomasville. The child's name was Mary Presson. Dr. Spilman reports that she was brought to the Orphanage by Dr. Mitchell and placed in the cottage he had given the Home, but the Home's records, writ-

ten perhaps several years after the event, record that she came with her mother, who became the first matron in the institution. If this is correct she was not, of course, a full orphan. Her mother is reported to have fallen sick on a visit to the Home in 1912 and is buried in the Home's cemetery.

The site was chosen by Dr. Scarborough and Mr. Mills. The owner of the land, Mr. L. W. Elliott, unlike another farmer, who on hearing that the Orphanage Association wanted to buy his land, doubled the price, reduced what he was asking for it, and sold the Association eighty acres for \$1,150. It was a beautiful piece of land, a little valley between two low ridges. The deal was closed on the very day that the two men first visited it. Mr. Mills then accepted the management — he had demurred until then — and set out to raise the necessary funds. But such was his faith that even before he had raised an additional dollar, a Mr. L. E. Peace and his black assistant, Ransom Oaks, were hired to clear the ground and lay the foundation of the first cottage with the help of three mules, Sandy, Sampson, and Delilah.

Money was hard to come by. The Baptists in the state were not ready for this new enterprise. The first big donor had to be convinced that the orphanage would actually materialize, but on becoming convinced that this was the Lord's work, gave a thousand dollars. He was Mr. Noah Biggs. Shortly afterwards Mr. John Watson, Dr. Fleming's father-in-law, came through with \$1,250. Dr. Mitchell and his brother agreed to give money for a building, and the Chowan Baptist Association collected another \$1,500 from its members. That was enough to set the ball rolling as more and more small gifts were subscribed.

On August 5, 1884, the Orphanage Association called a meeting on the grounds. Officially a stockholder's meeting, it became in effect a service of dedication. It was held under the shade of a large hickory tree where Dr. Scarborough and Mr. Mills had stood when they first viewed the site. Dr. Durham preached on the story of the widow's cruse. (II Kings 4:1-7). It was followed by a business meeting at which Dr. Watson was elected President. A Visiting Committee was set up, and the cornerstone laid for the first cottage, Mitchell Cottage for girls.

An apparently impossible dream had succeeded. During the summer and fall of 1895, sixteen Associations pledged their loyal support. The final triumph came when at its meeting in November, 1885, the State Convention voted unanimously to admit the orphanage into the Convention as a vital part of its work. It did not, however, assume its control until more than ten years later.

## Mr. Mills and the First Ten Years

Unlike many children's homes, Mills Home retains to this day much of its original format, although it has been enlarged. Essentially it consists of two avenues, joined by a loop at the end, making a horseshoe laid on the two ridges of land, and with a valley between them. The avenue on the Eastern ridge was named for Mr. Biggs and was to be the girls' part of the campus; the avenue on the Western ridge, which honored Mr. Watson, was where the boys would reside. This arrangement persisted until well into the 1960's.

By 1888 four cottages had been built, two for girls and two for boys. Mitchell stood near the entrance to Biggs Avenue, Biggs somewhat further down. On the boys' side, Durham was about halfway down the avenue and Watson about opposite Biggs.



Mitchell House — The first residence for girls.



Watson House — The first residence for boys.

These cottages were of a rather unusual design, and at the same time, much alike. They were each designed for twenty-four children, a small number for that time, and were staffed by two women, one of whom was also a teacher and the other principally a matron and dietitian. A curious feature was that each consisted of two separate buildings, across the avenue from each other. On the outside of the horseshoe was a residence, 24 feet by 90, housing the staff at one end and providing a schoolroom at the other, the middle, a room 50 feet long by 18 wide, being a dormitory. In the front there was a long porch. Across the avenue, facing each residence, was the "eating house," often named for some other members of the donor family, a four-roomed structure 60 feet by 16, with dining room, kitchen, larder and cook's sitting room, in one of which Mr. Mills set up his office. What bathing facilities there were in the residences is not stated, but one of the earliest buildings other than the four cottages to be built was a bathhouse.

The effect of this arrangement was to have four discrete units, each with its own one-room school, although Mr. Mills himself taught a class of older boys and girls. It is interesting that nearly a hundred years after this plan was devised, some treatment centers are returning to the concept of a separate classroom for each cottage group.

Mr. Mills would probably have been content with the four cottages. He believed that no orphanage should have more than a hundred children. He also wanted to take in children only between the ages of eight and fourteen. A school teacher at heart he wanted them of school-age, and he wanted to have them in care for at least two years. At sixteen they had to leave. He also did not believe in using the institution as, as he put it, a "way station" on the road to adoption. He tried from the very beginning to make the orphanage as much of a home as he could, yet some children were adopted. An "orphan's diary" of that time tells of a lady from Asheville who spent a day at the orphanage to select a little girl "to brighten her home" and how each of the children hoped that the chosen one would be she. Mr. Mills, however, rejected requests for a "strong older child to work in the fields and barns."



"Old Buck".

It must have been somewhat against his better judgment that he permitted the powerful Tar River Association to have its way and erect a cottage for smaller children, ages five through seven. The principal contributor was Mr. Dennis Simmons, and it is for him that the cottage was named, although Mr. Biggs, Mrs. Watson, and Mr. Watson also gave money, as did Miss C. C. Lilly. This building is omitted from the list that Dr. Spilman gives of buildings in 1895, and undoubtedly contributed to the increase, from 92 in 1888 to 133 in 1894, of children in care. It was completed in 1890, but burned in 1921, and was replaced.



The 1921 Simmons Cottage replacement.

Other buildings that were erected during the first ten years of the orphanage were a chapel, a brick and slate building 24'

x 36', to which Mrs. Fannie Lea made the first gift, in 1886; the Tabernacle or Arbor, an open-air structure used for meetings, the infirmary, to which Mrs. Fleming was the principal contributor, a print shop, the Lilly bathhouse and the office building, to which Mr. J. H. Lassiter was the largest contributor. There was no manager's residence, as Mr. Mills lived on his farm only a few minutes' drive away. In addition the orphanage had acquired a further 316 acres, mostly forest land.



An early cottage group of young children.

Rather little has been recorded of life at the orphanage during these years, but we do have some clues in the daily schedules that have survived. The rising bell went at five a.m., summer and winter, apparently largely because Mr. Mills was himself an early riser, but breakfast was not until seven, the time between being taken up in study, cottage prayers and household chores.

School in the winter met from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with two hours out at lunch time. In the summer, school lasted until noon and the afternoon was given to work, boys working on



Afternoons were work time.



Every child had a responsibility to work.

the farm or in the print shop and girls in the cottages. Supper was just before sunset and there was a nightly chapel service. In the winter the chapel service was replaced by singing and prayers in the cottages. There was little time for play and no organized recreation, no athletic field, gymnasium or swimming pool. It is recorded, however, that the boys swam in the creek that ran through the campus, and that this was the cause of the typhoid epidemic of 1890, the creek water being polluted upstream.

One little matter, however, illustrated Mr. Mills' concern for children. The pews in the Lea Chapel were graded in height for the children's comfort. He also apparently had a sense of humor, if a rather strange one. Little girls who appeared on campus bonnetless were provided, according to one

of them, with a metal saucepan, with holes punched in it for ventilation, to wear upon their heads.

Another pleasant little item was that when the new Presbyterian Orphanage at Barium Springs lost its one building by fire in its first year of operation, Mr. Mills immediately offered to house its children until a new building could be constructed. How he could have managed thirty-one extra children when his four cottages were full is hard to imagine, but no doubt Mr. Mills could have done it. Fortunately, perhaps, the Presbyterians rented two houses in Statesville.

Not all children came to the orphanage with their mother as had Mary Presson. They were sent, rather than taken. Mr. Mills' instructions, apparently to pastors, but maybe also to surviving parents, were as follows:

Write for blank application, fill it out carefully and return it to the orphanage. Then wait until the way can be opened for cheap transportation. If the orphan (or friends) can pay one cent a mile, say so. If not, say so. *Do not send anyone with the orphan* (italics mine). When tags and tickets are received, start the orphan, after due notice to the orphanage so that the orphan may be met at the train. When you want to hear from the orphanage send them money to buy stamps, etc., or subscribe to this paper (*Charity and Children*).

It must have been rather a bleak beginning for some children. It was almost as if the orphan were a parcel to be forwarded by UPS. One boy recalled, many years later, being put on the train immediately after seeing his little sister drive away with strangers and being told to forget her, for he would never see her again. The other passengers on the train did their best to console him.

In common with most children's homes at that time, the orphanage was generally unwilling to accept a child whose father was living, unless the father was "incapacitated by disease or otherwise from taking care" of his children, although the rule against it could be suspended by the President of the Board of Trustees, rather than the General Manager. What made one an orphan was the loss of a breadwinning father.

There is a sad little statement in *Charity and Children* in 1891: "A mother begs us to take her children because her husband is so cruel to her and her children; but this is an Orphan House and we cannot take children with living parents; even if they are worse off than orphans." It was not until the number of orphans began to decline in the 1920's and 1930's that children's homes began to serve "orphans of the living." There was a real fear that to care for neglected or abused

children was to tempt parents to be irresponsible.

Unlike the practice in some orphanages, the child did not have to belong to the denomination sponsoring the Home. Mr. Mills was quite explicit on that. "Our rule," he wrote in 1895, "is to help the most needy. We never ask the poor little orphans if they are Baptists. Baptists control the orphanage, but they are not selfish enough to confine the benefits of the orphanage to their own children." This recalls a comment made many years later by the head of a Baptist Home. "Many of our children," he said, "aren't Baptists when they come, but they are by the time that they leave."

Mr. Mills was, it should be remarked, very direct in his writings. Here is his advertisement for a matron for Biggs Cottage:

She should be pious and industrious and free from all the vices against which we warn children. She should understand keeping a house in order, cutting and making clothes and the proper preparation of the different kinds of food; she should know how to milk, make cheese and prepare butter for the table; she should know how to raise chickens, how and when to plant vegetables, and how to sow seeds; how to make soap to make it good, and to use it when made. Girls in their teens, women who use intoxicating liquors, opium or tobacco are requested not to apply.

Life, in fact, in the Home was a serious business. It is said, although the quotation cannot be located, that one such advertisement ended, "This is no job for a lady."

Religion was very much part of the life of the Home as well as of Mr. Mills' personal life. At one time it was reported that in a four week period there had been 92 religious services on campus. Visiting pastors might be invited to hold a service impromptu; the bell would ring and children and staff assembled in the chapel. From the beginning Mr. Mills engaged a pastor to preach at the Home. The Reverend J. N. Stallings, and succeeding him, the Reverend Henry Sheets served as chaplains, the latter also being appointed assistant manager of the orphanage and assistant editor of *Charity and Children*.

However, Mr. Mills' dream was an organized church on campus. Every year he asked the Board for permission to start one, but it was not until 1891 that they agreed. In the meantime he implored the Board of Missions and Sunday Schools of the State Convention for funds, but was turned down on the grounds that there were two churches within three miles of the orphanage — the Thomasville church, a mile distant, and the Rich Fork Church, which Mr. Mills himself had been in-

strumental in founding. The Thomasville church also declined to provide a house near the orphanage grounds in which the orphans could worship along with townspeople.

On April 28, 1891, however, a church was constituted with twenty-four members at the orphanage. The Reverend J. D. Newton, who had been chaplain for some time, and was, incidentally, Mr. Mills' son-in-law, was called as pastor. He was succeeded by the Reverend J. M. Hilliard, who was the orphanage's treasurer, and he in turn by the Reverend S. W. Hall, Mr. Hilliard's successor as treasurer. The church elected its first deacon and deaconess in 1892. Mr. William Pickett and Miss Nannie Williams, a teacher who later married Mr. Dennis Simmons. In 1894, Mr. Newton again became pastor. The church met with some opposition from the Liberty Baptist Association, but two years later applied for membership.

There was apparently still a strong fear in the state that organs of the orphanage would compete with or detract from other Baptist causes. There was immediate opposition when Mr. Mills, with the approval of the Visiting Committee established by the Orphanage Association, began to publish *Charity and Children* in 1887.

After two issues the Association itself ordered it discontinued. Mr. Mills was not aware of this action, or said that he was not, and continued publication. When he was challenged on this, he immediately offered his resignation on the grounds that he could not work if the Association was to make all the decisions. His resignation was declined. The Visiting Committee immediately raised the money for a printing press, familiarly known as "Old Betsy," and the editor of the *Charlotte Observer*, Mr. Joseph Caldwell, reported that *Charity and Children* was one of the brightest journals in all the land, but had the appearance of having been printed on a cider press and one often had to stand on one's head to read it. The paper had a hard time because it was at first distributed free and had several hiatuses between editors. By 1894 it was in such a poor state that the Baptist State Convention ordered it discontinued, but since the Convention did not own the orphanage, the paper continued to be published.

It was a solid-looking newspaper-size weekly, most of which was taken up by leading articles by Mr. Newton and Dr. T. H. Pritchard, both well-known religious writers who were, despite the objections of the *Biblical Recorder*, paid for their contributions, but it also had its lighter side. There were frequent little quips and jokes, and also some articles on child care. One charming little column begged that little girls be allowed to "romp" rather than always behave maturely. Another gave this advice:

## ADMISSION.

The following form of application for admission to the Orphanage was adopted by the Orphanage Association. When filled out, it should be forwarded to the General Manager, who will consider the case and give advice in regard to transportation:

County, N. C. 1888.

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is an orphan without estate and having no near relation who can and will provide for \_\_\_\_\_ education. His father's name was \_\_\_\_\_ and he died in the year \_\_\_\_\_. His mother's name was \_\_\_\_\_ and she died in the year \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ is sound in body and mind, not addicted to any scandalous vices, and is \_\_\_\_ years old.

I being h \_\_\_\_\_ hereby deliver h \_\_\_\_\_ to the N. C. Baptist Orphanage Association, to be taught and trained according to the rules made by the said Association.

Witness,

## EMPLOYMENT.

When orphans are ready to be discharged, they are returned to their near relatives; but if they have none, they go to some one wishing to employ them. Here is the blank form adopted.

I propose to employ an orphan on the following terms:

The said orphan agrees to work faithfully and cheerfully in the occupation of a \_\_\_\_\_ for two years; to treat me, my family, and my friends with proper respect and courtesy; to be kind to my stock and to give them due attention, to be careful in the use of tools, doing them no needless injury; to observe the rules of morality, and to attend religious services according to his opportunities.

I also agree to furnish the said orphan a comfortable bed and healthful board, and to pay him for his services, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ a month for the first year, and \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the second year.

I promise to protect said orphan against needless temptation, or provocation, and to do my best to promote his moral and religious welfare.

Signed,

Witness,

## ADOPTION.

Sometimes childless couples wish to adopt orphans "without any kin." In such cases the following was adopted.

I hereby propose to adopt \_\_\_\_\_ and treat him as my own child, in the following particulars:

1. By supplying him with comfortable shelter, a sufficiency of wholesome food and suitable and seasonable clothing.

2. By giving him the opportunity to acquire a good English education.

3. By teaching him to perform with skill the different kinds of labor which will probably be expected of him in subsequent life.

4. By instructing him in a pure morality and the truths of the Bible.

5. By protecting him against vicious companions and needless temptation.

6. By giving him at my death or his majority, I promise the foregoing without any reservation or evasion.

Signed,

Witness,

The Association also adopted another form but it is like the last, except that the word "take" is substituted for "adopt."

A child's brain is not in a condition to study before its seventh year...when a child is precocious there is special reason for holding it back, if it is to be saved from brain disease, future dullness or possible imbecility.

It gave a full report each year of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, and paid special attention to the work of Charles Loring Brace, who gathered up the "little wanderers" from the streets of New York and placed them with farm families in the Midwest, but it did not approve of these placements being supervised in any way, as supervision would cast doubt on the parental impulse of the people who took them in. In its own pages it provided an application form for those wanting to employ or adopt an orphan.

Its price, in 1888, was \$1.00 a year, and its editor was J. W. Oliver. It carried advertisements, at first only for Christian schools, but by 1889 for insurance companies, oil, public auctions, Piedmont Air Lines (a railroad) and, surprisingly, Bull Durham tobacco. Each number carried the text: "Teach us what we shall do unto the child" from Judges 13:8.

The presumptive owner of the Institution was the Orphanage Association, but in 1888 legal doubts were raised as to whether such an association could hold real estate, and it was decided to incorporate. The charter was approved by the General Assembly of North Carolina on March 11, 1889, and provided for a self-perpetuating board of eighteen. This replaced the old Male Visiting Committee of five which had operated as a governing board since 1885. It also abolished a curious anomaly, the Female Visiting Committee of three, of whom Dr. Spilman remarks that they acted "as a kind of ornamental auxiliary — quite useful in all respects except the actual management of the affairs of the orphanage." They were required, however, "to inspect dormitories, food and clothing."

The new Board was exclusively masculine, and very largely ministerial. Its President was the Reverend John Mitchell; its secretary, the Reverend A. G. McManaway; and its Treasurer, the Reverend J. W. Oliver, the first editor of *Charity and Children* after Mr. Mills himself. Its list of members includes the familiar names of Durham, Biggs, Scarborough, Fleming, and Gwaltney. One of its members, W. T. Faircloth, who was later to be appointed the Board's attorney, became in time Chief Justice of North Carolina's Supreme Court.

The need for an attorney arose from the fact that the orphanage now owned considerable property. An endowment

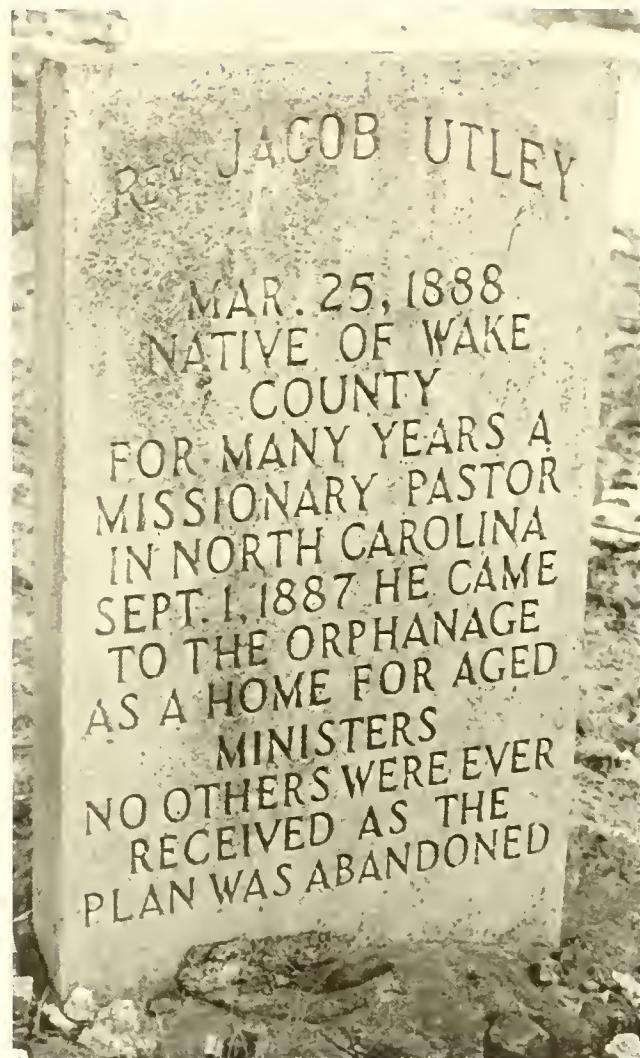
Three forms John Mills printed in *Charity and Children*, 1888, to be used to admit a child or for families interested in getting a child to raise.

fund was slowly accumulating — it reached about \$2,200 in the first ten years — and wills were being made naming the orphanage as beneficiary. The orphanage's income was, however, largely from individual gifts and special collections or budgetary pledges in the churches. The income for the first full year of operation was just under \$6,000, and ten years later was \$9,300. These were times of financial stringency and in 1892, a depression year, Mr. Mills characteristically disobeyed the Board's policy of not sending the children out on tours to "sing for their supper" and did exactly that. The institution was administered at what might be thought of as minimum cost, without being penurious. The cost of caring for a child was reckoned at \$48 a year. Teachers received \$20 a month and their board, and houseparents \$12.50, slightly lower, although not markedly so than what was paid in comparable institutions at that time.

Mr. Mills was under constant pressure, particularly from the Tar River Association, to accept retarded and handicapped children into the orphanage. He did not feel that he could do so but he espoused the cause of both of these groups. He went as far as to organize an association to erect a home for what were then known as the "feeble-minded" and actually stimulated a Captain John T. Patrick to donate land for the project, but failed to raise the funds necessary to operate the facility. He constantly urged the State to provide for its retarded citizens and when a certain Anthony Davis left \$20,000 to Lenoir County, urged that the County use the money for a school for feeble-minded children "on the Desmond farm near the grave of Richard Caswell." Although it was not built until a number of years after Mr. Mills' death, the Caswell Training School now stands within a stone's throw of that site. Mr. Mills also pled eloquently for an institution for wayward boys and girls, and for a hospital for the crippled. Although none of those was established during his lifetime he started people thinking about the needs of the state's most least considered young people, truly "the least of these."

One project he did carry through, although only one couple took advantage of it. This was a little cabin, near the entrance to the orphanage, for an aged and indigent Baptist minister and his wife, who were cared for largely by Mary Adams, the matron in Watson Cottage. The Reverend Jacob and Mrs. Aplis Utley lived there for six months, and died within two weeks of each other in March, 1888. No other couple, however, applied to live there, and the cabin was removed. The Utleys were buried on the campus.

In the meantime things were by no means peaceful at the orphanage. There was still a great deal of anti-orphanage feel-



Utley Grave marker.

ing in the state; among the charges made in public or in the press were that the children did no work, but loafed around, that the girls all dressed in silk, that the orphanage was rolling in wealth and its officers rode around in fine buggies or on fine horses, and, conversely that the children were cruelly treated, half-clothed and starving. Mr. Mills ascribed these stories, which were patently untrue, to the Father of Lies himself. He believed in an objective, personal Devil.

He also alienated some of the support that he had always enjoyed from the *Biblical Recorder*, and from a new paper, the *North Carolina Baptist*. Mr. Mills believed that for the safety of children even church-sponsored institutions should be inspected by the State. "During the past five years," he wrote on one occasion, "horrible cruelties have been practiced in one of our so-called charity institutions." The two papers took an opposing view. Mr. Mills retorted vehemently in print, calling the *Recorder's* editor a "persecutor" and asking the Lord to forgive him and help him mend his ways. But even more ominously, Mr. Mills began to quarrel with his Board, mostly over little matters. As was to be expected from his history, Mr. Mills was not prepared to take orders from a Board. He was experienced and on the spot, and they were neither. It is indeed rather surprising that this forthright headstrong, impulsive man lasted as long as he did. In 1894, for the first time, the vote to reappoint him as Manager was not unanimous, and in the following year he was not reappointed. He apparently accepted this decision without rancor, although he reacted vigorously to some criticism in *Charity and Children* of the school system he had established at the orphanage. He retired to his farm, saw a close friend installed as his successor, and died three and a half years later, at the age of sixty-seven. It was not until thirty-four years later that the Home he had founded was renamed in his honor.

After his death, the trustees wished to have him buried on the orphanage grounds and a monument erected in his honor. He had, however, already selected his resting place in the churchyard of Rich Fork Church and there he lies today. His grave marker reads, "Father of the fatherless, friend of the friendless, helper of the helpless, benefactor of the poor, well done thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."



John Mills historical marker near Thomasville.

### III

## Mr. Boone and the Second Decade

The man who was selected to fill Mr. Mills' shoes was the Reverend J. B. Boone. His wife was also employed as Lady Assistant, a position called in turn "Lady Principal" and "Lady Manager."



J. B. Boone, Second General Manager, 1895-1905.

He was fifty-eight years old, a native of Northampton County, and had had a varied career. He had entered Wake Forest College at the age of twenty-four, but had not completed his studies there because of the War. He served in the

Confederate cavalry, was captured and for two years was a prisoner of war, an experience which was followed by three years of ill health and financial problems. At thirty-three he was ordained and in the following year entered the Southern Baptist Seminary in Greenville, South Carolina. Going to Charlotte as a missionary for the State Mission Board, he became interested in education, ran successfully for the School Board, as it would now be termed, and became Superintendent of the Charlotte schools, where he introduced the modern graded system. His school became a model for the rest of the state.

After two years, he reunited with the State Mission Board, was for six years President of Judson College in Hendersonville, preached for a while in Missouri but returned to North Carolina to attempt to establish a Baptist college for women. Finding too much opposition and indifference for this to be accomplished, he accepted the pastorate of the Windsor and Union churches, from which he was called to the orphanage.

He had met Mr. Mills when the latter was owner and editor of the *Biblical Recorder*. Mr. Mills had shown him exceptional kindness at a time when Mr. Boone was entirely out of funds, lending him his horse and buggy to visit his old home in Northampton County, and the two men had become fast friends.

It is sad to relate that Mr. Boone faced many of the same problems that Mr. Mills had encountered. There were still irresponsible rumors about the orphanage. It was stated that only rich children were accepted, that they were trained to be "nabobs and plutocrats," that the Board of Trustees were paid fat salaries, that discipline was both far too lax and at the same time harsh and cruel, and that the state made a liberal appropriation to the work. A statewide paper later characterized orphans as "tough chaps" who had become "sacred beings," for whom work was not to be thought of and who can only be "obtained in homes where the entire family is constantly singing hymns and muttering prayers."

And Mr. Boone, no less than Mr. Mills, had difficulty with his Board, and at the end of about the same period — ten years — was under such criticism that although the Board re-elected him as manager, he declined the appointment. This suggests that it had not been only Mr. Mills' inability to work with a

Board that had cost the orphanage its founding manager. The Board may also have been very difficult to work with. It did, however, have one outstanding characteristic, which has been maintained to this day. Unlike most orphanage Boards of that time, it never interfered in the admission, discipline, or discharge of a child. Its concern was solely that of policy and management, property and financial affairs. It also had an unusual set-up in that the Executive Committee, which met between Board meetings, was not composed of its officers, which is the most common arrangement, but had its own chairman, who often would appear to have as much influence on the affairs of the orphanage as the President or Chairman of the Board as a whole.

Mr. Mills had recommended to the Board shortly before his resignation that the plant be expanded to care for 150 children, that the number be held to this indefinitely, and that if the orphanage wished to care for more it should do so by establishing a branch elsewhere. When Mr. Boone took over there were 113 children in care. There must have been an attrition over the summer, for Dr. Spilman reports 133 when Mr. Mills resigned.

By 1900, however, the number was 183, by 1903 it had reached 236, and in 1905 it was 307, more than twice Mr. Mills' optimum number. This was made possible by the building of five new cottages during this time. In 1899 Dr. R. D. Fleming, a trustee, left \$1,000 for the erection of a nursery. In 1902 Mr. J. A. Durham of Charlotte gave the money to build a cottage — Mothers — in memory of his mother. The following year, Mr. John C. Whitty built a home for girls in memory of his daughter Rowena. At the same time Mr. E. F. Aydlett of Elizabeth City, who was to serve as President of the Board of Trustees, challenged his Association (Chowan) to match his own gift of a cottage, and Aydlett and Chowan were built. In addition the Fannie Miller building, which had been started in 1893, was finished near the beginning of Mr. Boone's time.

But the major buildings to be erected during Mr. Boone's administration were the Central Building and the Central Dining Hall. The first was Mr. Boone's pet project, which was erected early in his administration. It was used as a school, an assembly hall, a church and an administration building. In connection with its furnishing there is a touching little story, comparable to that of "Little Joe" at Barium Springs Presbyterian Orphanage, of a little girl, Rena Baucom, on the point of death donating her total wealth of twenty-five cents to the orphanage. It is a sad fact that one cannot write the history of any orphanage that was founded in the nineteenth



Central Building — school, assembly, church, and office.

century without recording the death, both in the orphanage and among its benefactors, of many children, a large proportion of them little girls — Dr. Spilman names six of them — who seemed particularly liable to tuberculosis and pneumonia.



Central dining hall.

The Central Dining Room was completed in 1904, and paid for by the estates of Chief Justice Faircloth and Mr. P. W. Johnson. It is perhaps indicative of the difference between Mr. Mills and Mr. Boone, for all their friendship, that Mr. Mills wanted to keep things small and family-like, but Mr. Boone

was more interested in the most economical way of caring for children, although he did put forth some social justification for central dining. It brought the whole institution together. With rather less justification, Mr. Boone enlarged Biggs Cottage to care for sixty girls in one building. An alumna whom the present writer met in the early 1950's spoke of the terror she would experience when Mr. Boone would appear at dinner. He would not infrequently use the occasion to dismiss some young miscreant with the words, "You ungrateful child. Depart and darken our doors no more."

The little girl, a model child, was convinced every time Mr. Boone appeared, that some secret sin of her own had been detected and she would be cast into outer darkness, although she wanted to stay at the Home.

During his management, in addition to the Central Building, the Dining Room and the five cottages, Mr. Boone built the Mills Industrial Building, the Manager's Residence — Mr. Mills had lived on his own farm three miles away — and the Noah Richardson Library, erected at the expense of the Reverend J. B. Richardson of High Point. The Library contained a fireproof vault to keep the records of the orphanage, and by the terms of Mr. Richardson's gift cannot accept any book "of an infidel or skeptical character" and any book or paper that "in any way or manner opposes the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, nor any novel that is not of a pure and elevating character." Mr. Boone also built a shoe factory, with the idea that this would both enable the orphanage to train boys as cobblers, and also bring in money. It proved, however, not to be economically viable and became in time simply a shoe repair shop.

The school was Mr. Boone's greatest interest. It operated through the seventh grade. Its curriculum contained physiology and hygiene, although "time spent in teaching anatomy before high school work is time almost thrown away."

It was seen as superior to the public schools, not only because it included religious instruction, but also because it could be coordinated with life on campus. "Here the lecturer on morals is hardby the field of application, very little time between theory and practice."

Four times during Mr. Boone's tenure apparent disaster struck the institution. One June 8, 1899, a near tornado and hailstorm destroyed all the crops and blew out all the windows on the West side of the new Central Building. A second, similar storm occurred on July 21, 1905. In both cases, however, the apparent disaster was a blessing in disguise, as it produced an outpouring of generosity from people in the state. The same was true of the fire which consumed the barn. Five

mules and a horse were lost. On this occasion the ever practical and generous Mr. Noah Biggs, one of whose sidelines was dealing in horses and mules, was able to raise money so fast that five new mules were at the Orphanage only four days after the fire.

The fourth disaster was not so easily overcome. The early history of nearly every children's home discloses the same mundane problem — that of an adequate and safe water supply. A sister institution discovered, when this was at last obtained, that the children's previously spotty complexions cleared up almost overnight. Mills Home, however, was to pay more heavily for its reliance on the natural springs of its terrain. Crowded conditions, and the assembly of children from all parts of the state who had developed no immunity to the Thomasville water, resulted in a series of epidemics. As early as 1900, Dr. C. A. Julian had warned that the orphanage had become a threat to the health of its residents. There had been, as we have noted, an outbreak of typhoid in 1890. Following Dr. Julian's warning, Mr. Boone asked that \$1,000 be put aside to dig a well and pipe water into a small tank in each of the cottages. In actual fact, \$2,200 was subscribed and the Board voted to put in a complete waterworks system, including sewerage. Up to that time water had to be carried in buckets from the spring.

The problem was that the institution was built on a solid mass of granite. By the spring of 1904, the Board authorized drilling down to 800 feet. When this limit was reached, Mr. Boone ordered it to go deeper still, and finally water was found at 876 feet. But the four years of drilling had taken way too long. Typhoid returned to the campus. Two children died and were buried on the same day and some of the staff were among the more than one hundred cases which occurred. The waterworks system was completed in July, 1905. It had cost not \$2,200, but \$12,374. It was partly due to very sharp criticism from Dr. Julian and from Mr. Josiah William Bailey, editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, about his handling of the situation that Mr. Boone declined reappointment as general manager that same year.

The waterworks left a debt of over \$11,000 in Mr. Boone's last year. Otherwise contributions kept up with the increasing number of children enrolled. In 1895, the year Mr. Boone became manager, contributions were \$9,375 and in 1905, when he left, \$36,538. What made the greatest difference to the Home's future stability was the bequest of Mr. Dennis Simmons, the donor of Simmons cottage and a Board member for nine years. He left the orphanage the almost unheard of amount of nearly \$100,000 — \$99,800 to be exact — thereby



Original *Charity and Children* print shop.

increasing the Home's endowment nearly fifty times and doubling the value of all that it possessed.

*Charity and Children*, as we have seen, appeared to be "dying on the vine" at the end of Mr. Mills' time. It had frequently been without an editor and its circulation had dwindled to about 2,000. Part of the problem seems to have been that the Board tried to combine the job of editor with being treasurer of the Home, or pastor of the church, so that the man chosen as editor did not in most cases have any experience in journalism. The paper, a solid mass of newsprint, showed little evidence of editorial know how. But the Board, in 1895, departed from tradition and employed Mr. Archibald Johnson, a former editor of the *Laurinburg Exchange* and founder of the *Red Spring Citizen*, to take over the paper. Mr. Johnson edited *Charity and Children* for thirty-nine years until his death at the age of seventy-five. He made it one of the foremost orphanage papers in the South and the one with the largest circulation. Indeed, by 1900 it ranked fifth in circulation of all newspapers in North Carolina.

Mr. Johnson must have been something of a "character." He highly resented being referred to or addressed as "Revend" — he was not ordained — and would not print either poetry or letters from children. He was also unalterably opposed to any organized recreation for the children. "The idea of the organization," he wrote on one occasion, "of a baseball or football team at an orphanage is simply too ludicrous" and, some years later, "There is not a baseball ground, golf link, tennis lawn on the orphanage grounds. But we do have a corn field, cow lot and wash house."

Mr. Johnson's emphasis was clearly on work and not play. His aversion to golf might have even been stronger if he had

known that those boys who were seen knocking a ball about in the "Valley" between the boys' and girls' cottages would deliberately slice or hook a ball into the girls' territory in order to exchange a word or two with a girl whilst one was retrieving it. The penalty, at that time, for a boy touching a girl, even accidentally, was a week of bread and water only.

*Charity and Children* emphasized again and again the value of work programs, both as revenue producers — "the shoe shop . . . is a nice little money-maker", and as training for the children. In 1900 it reported:

All the work of the Institution, with the exception of some of the heavy farm work . . . is done by the children. The girls do the cooking, washing, ironing, house cleaning and dairying, while the boys work in the garden, milk the cows, chop wood, make fires, sell vegetables and go errands. . . . The children not only have to work, but they are taught to look upon all honest work, however humble, not by any means as degrading but on the contrary honorable and ennobling.

and again, a year later:

The Orphanage farm is after all the most valuable department of the Institution, not only because of the revenue it produces, but because it gives the boys an opportunity to be of some account in the world. Every orphanage ought to be located in the country and own a big farm.



The Strawberry Patch.

The work program also prepared children with useful skills. Graduates of the print shop found jobs with many of the newspapers of the state. Other boys became expert cobblers. The emphasis was, of course, on boys. Girls were expected to be homemakers, although Mr. Boone's successor did attempt, in 1910, to establish a school of nursing in connection with the Infirmary. It did not turn out to be practical.



The short-lived School of Nursing.



Miss Sallie McCracken.



Miss Eulalia Turner.

Several people who were to serve Mills Home for extended periods were recruited by Mr. Boone. First and foremost was Miss Sallie McCracken, who except for a ten-month period of looking after her invalid mother, worked for the Home for seventy-three years as teacher, as secretary to four superintendents and in her later years as research secretary. It is most doubtful that her record will ever be surpassed at Mills Home or anywhere else. Miss Annie Hall, also a

teacher and later librarian, served for more than forty years. Miss Eulalia Turner, who survived a very serious encounter with typhoid in the epidemic of 1905 and in the same year succeeded Mrs. Boone as Lady Manager, served thirty-nine years.

There were also long-time Board members. The Reverend Martin Luther Kesler, who was to succeed Mr. Boone as manager, was on the Board for nine years before assuming that post, and served the Home for thirty-six years. Mr. Stephen McIntyre, the first student to matriculate in the Law School at Wake Forest, was elected to the Board soon after his graduation and served as attorney for the Board for twenty-seven years. Dr. Spilman rates him as the Board member who rendered more valuable service to the orphanage than any other man who has ever served on the Board, and equates his contribution in dollars not charged along with the benefactions of Dennis Simmons, Noah Biggs, and W. L. Kennedy. Mr. E. F. Aydlett, besides his donation of a cottage, served for twenty-five years on the Board, was its President but was not reappointed in 1927 on the grounds that he was serving on too many boards. He actually served on five, including that of Wake Forest College. And again the orphanage must have set a record or a near record. The Reverend Thomas Carrick, a member of the founding Board and for many years its secretary, served a half-century on the Board, and attended forty-nine of its first fifty annual meetings.

One group that received very little attention in histories of this time were the matrons. Dr. Spilman does not mention a single one of them. Mr. Boone advertised in 1903 for a Matron for Biggs Cottage which housed "about four dozen of our largest girls." He asked for a lady

who has sufficient intelligence and force of character to command respect of our large girls; one who has skill and experience in having food well prepared and served; and one who understands dressmaking well enough to have it done and to teach the girls.

There is at least one tribute to the work of these women in the pages of *Charity and Children*. In 1901 the Editor wrote:

Matrons have much to try their souls. Perhaps we do not appreciate the great work these women do and the greater responsibilities they bear. To be the instructor of half a dozen children is a hard task, but to stand in a mother's place over thirty or thirty-five — ah, that is harder than many of us thought.

One landmark passed during this time. The old hickory tree under which the Orphanage Association had met in 1885

began to decay, and in 1898 had to be cut down. A stone reproduction of a hickory stump was erected to memorialize its location.

Mrs. Boone, as Lady Manager, had been so much appreciated by the Board, staff and children that on her husband's retirement the Board wanted her to continue in the

post, but she declined to do so. The Boones moved to Hendersonville, where Mr. Boone had been for six years President of Judson College. Mr. Boone died three years later, at the age of seventy-one. Dr. Spilman calls him "the master builder."

## IV

# The Long Reign of Dr. Kesler



Dr. Martin Luther Kesler, Third General Manager, 1905-1932.

The Reverend Martin Luther Kesler was forty-seven years old when he took over the reins at Mills Home. He was therefore considerably younger than either of the previous general managers. The son of a substantial farmer in Iredell County, he grew up a man of scholarly habits. His brother, John Louis Kesler, was for many years professor of biology and later professor of the Bible at Baylor University, and a foremost scholar of his time. Young Martin — his father was a Lutheran, hence the name — attended two of the private academies that sprung up all over the South after the War Between the States, and entered Wake Forest College as a

sophomore, apparently at the age of twenty-seven. Later he took the Master of Theology degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

His mother was a Baptist, and as a youth he had been converted by no less a man than J. B. Boone, his predecessor at Mills Home, during one of Mr. Boone's missionary journeys. On leaving the seminary he served for a short time as Secretary to the Sunday School Department of the Baptist State Convention, but finding that the Baptists of the State were not ready to accept centralization of the work, he went into the pastoral ministry and served in turn churches in Laurinburg, Spring Hill, Red Springs, High Point, Rocky Mount, Scotland Neck and Morganton, six pastorates in thirteen years in different parts of the state. He was to stay at Mills Home for twenty-seven years, until his untimely death, which suggests that he had really found what the Lord wanted him to do.

During his time at Mills Home, he became a national figure in the child welfare field. Election to the Board of the Baptist orphanage, in 1896, was only the first of many responsibilities he undertook. Denominationally he served on the Boards of Wake Forest and Meredith Colleges and Baptist Hospital at Winston-Salem, and was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree by Wake Forest College in 1916; statewide he was a Board member of both the State Department of Public Welfare and the State School for the Blind; nationally he served on the board of the Child Welfare League of America and was a delegate from North Carolina to two of the first White House Conferences on Children and Youth. He also undertook local responsibilities, and served on the Davidson County School Board.

He was described at various times as "as fine as silk" equally able "to run a sawmill or extract the finest shade of meaning from a Greek classic," and as "good, safe, sensible, conservative, prudent and practical." The article ends by saying that he loved children and children loved him, but in the memories of some children he was a stern individual. Franklin Bailey recalls their first meeting when Dr. Kesler indicated to two frightened new little boys that his suspenders held up his trousers but that the belt, which he also wore, had other uses.

Discipline for most infractions of rules was in fact largely physical, but one could also be sentenced to a month's dishwashing for thirty or more children, a penalty one alumnus remembers as leaving one's hand in an extremely painful state. A little insight into his views on children is given by his explanation of why there were thirteen runaways in 1914. It was due, he thought, to not having had "the usual religious services, resulting in a general letting down of esprit de corps, and partly by the unreasoned restlessness of youth." Yet very few children are listed each year as having been expelled for disciplinary reasons — perhaps one or two each year.

He was conservative in fiscal matters, and perhaps in his general philosophy of orphanage care. Twice, in the first five years of his superintendency, there were efforts to shorten the time in which children stayed in an institutional setting by trying to find permanent families for them as soon as possible. The first was instigated by the *Biblical Recorder* in 1906, and the second by the founding of the North Carolina Home Finding Society two years later. Representatives of that society sought to address the Baptist Convention but were politely discouraged from doing so. Dr. Kesler and Baptists in general were wedded to the proposition, which persisted so long in the institutional field, that the orphanage, if it took pains to do so, could provide all the advantages of a real home, despite the large number of children in a cottage — even at the end of his time there were thirty children and more in a number of the cottages. "It is a growing conviction," he wrote in 1908, "that children should remain in the orphanage until they are prepared to look after themselves." In actual fact the average length of stay was approximately eight years.

Modern child welfare experts would not agree with him, but Dr. Kesler acted courageously on his conviction. In a very daring move, for it involved extra cost, he decided to return to Mr. Mills' policy of having each cottage serve its own meals. He abandoned the dining hall as such, built each new cottage with a kitchen and dining room, and during the seven years from 1918 to 1925 added kitchens to all the existing cottages. The old "eating houses" apparently no longer existed.

Dr. Kesler was also convinced that the churches were not only the logical but the "divinely appointed guardians of orphan children." Neither the State or a fraternal organization, "however worthy," could do what was needed. In 1915 either he or the Editor of *Charity and Children* wrote:

We have always contended that the training of orphan children is peculiarly the province of the church. . . . The church, above all other organizations, is better

prepared to stand *in loco parentis* to the fatherless, than any other agency in the world. The State could never do the work that is being done here.

And in 1921 the same paper took a strong stand against the receipt of any public money at all:

We are not receiving a dollar from the State treasury in any shape or form. Perhaps we are entitled to our share of public money and of the direct appropriation for the education of the children from the various counties of the state. . . . Accepting even a trifling sum from the public treasury to which we are entitled would prevent our saying to all the world that the institution is wholly supported by the voluntary efforts of Christian people.

But he expressed himself year after year as being overwhelmed by the applications he received, and was very conscious of the overcrowding in the Home. He thought that the orphanage was taking many children who could more profitably stay at home.

Dr. Kesler never saw the mission of a children's home to be that of helping to restore children to their families. That was to come later, although by the end of Dr. Kesler's reign a substantial number — about six percent — of the children enrolled had both parents living. Medical advances, largely due to the Great War, were keeping more parents alive throughout their child-rearing years. Dr. Kesler was one of the first to catch the spirit of the 1909 White House Conference on Dependent Children and urge his state to establish a Mother's Pension to prevent children being placed in orphanages for reasons of poverty alone. In 1912 he wrote in *Charity and Children*:

This strikes us as a very sensible and proper thing to do. No child ought to be separated from its mother if there is any possible chance to keep it under her personal care. There is no orphanage in the world that can take the place of a good mother.

He continued to press for this legislation each year with the support of the North Carolina Conference for Social Service and other superintendents of children's homes. In 1919 he wrote, "The orphanage should never be the means, or the excuse, for breaking up a home in which there is a mother in good health, capable of controlling her children and of worthy moral character." His purpose was accomplished when North Carolina passed a mother's pension law in 1923.

He also did much more. Perhaps influenced by the flood of applications he was receiving — for several years they averaged seventy a month — and the time it would take for the state system to become fully operative, he established a Mother's Aid program at the orphanage. Not only was this the first such program in the Carolinas; it was by far the most extensive. While a sister institution of comparable size, Connie Maxwell in South Carolina, never had more than fifty children in such a program, North Carolina Baptists had in 1927, more than a third of all the children it served. In addition, in the same year, 130 children were helped to make arrangements with relatives or friends, and so neither received Mother's Aid nor came to the institution.

The Mother's Aid program also gave the Baptist Orphanage the distinction of being the first institution in the Carolinas, and probably in the South, to employ a social worker. Three years after the program started, Dr. Kesler appointed Miss Hattie Edwards to head what was then known as the Mother's Aid Department. This was in 1923. He did not wait, as did most superintendents of children's homes, for The Duke Endowment to provide, as was its intention, funds for new and innovative services, although he welcomed the funds when they came and used them to enrich the program.



Miss Hattie Edwards.

"Miss Hattie" was not only the first social worker to be employed by a children's home in the South; she was the first to have any professional training. She took courses at Columbia, the University of North Carolina, and Duke. She had come to Mills Home originally in 1909 as principal of the school, served ten years in this position, was Lady Manager

at Kennedy Home for two years, returned to the public schools for a short while, and on her retirement in 1945 had served the Baptist Homes for more than thirty-four years, twenty-two of them as Social Worker or Director of Social Service. Her principal tasks in Dr. Kesler's time were investigating applications for admission and supervising Mother's Aid recipients. She did not begin foster home work until after Dr. Kesler's death, nor is there much evidence that she acted as counselor to the children in care, as did later social workers. She probably would not have had the time; her caseload was enormous. In one year she is reported to have disposed of 749 cases, or an average of two and a half every working day. Seventy-five were admitted to the institution, 38 given Mother's Aid and 179 accepted and put on a waiting list. Of the remainder — the figures do not add up exactly — 329 were adjusted by making plans with relatives or in some other way, and 98 were rejected. It is clear that some of these plans must have been rather hurriedly made and certainly left her little time for work on campus.

Nor was Dr. Kesler influenced as much as were some superintendents by the mental health movement that was beginning to reshape child care. He did, however, make use of mental tests for the children as early as 1922, but this was largely in order to improve the school curriculum, although it did result in the establishment of some special classes for children with unusual educational needs.

The school was one of Dr. Kesler's chief interests. When he came on the scene the school extended only through the seventh grade. The eighth grade was added immediately. A small number of boys (but no girls) were allowed to complete the ninth grade at Thomasville High School. By 1910 the ninth grade had been added, and Latin was placed in the curriculum. In 1924 the School went on what was known as the 12-1 plan — four terms of twelve weeks, each followed by one week of vacation, instead of a long summer break. School was run in two shifts, one in the morning and one in the afternoon; boys and girls worked half the day (4½ hours) and went to school the other half (also 4½ hours, but with two hours set aside in the evening for study).

Miss Annie Hall was succeeded by Miss Hattie Edwards as Principal. It took another five years before there was a tenth grade at Mills Home, but that came in 1915, and in 1922 the last year, at that time the eleventh in all of North Carolina, enabled students actually to graduate from the Mills Home school, and to go directly to college. There does not appear to have been at this time an official program to further higher education for alumni, but Dr. Spilman comments that the boy

or girl who graduated at Mills Home but did not enter college was "a rare exception." Incidentally, in every graduating class, the majority of those graduating were girls. The senior class of 1925, for instance, contained 30 girls and only eight boys; that of 1926 was all girls, although they were joined by three boys and three girls from Thomasville. Boys tended to leave early for jobs or to find orphanage life too confining. Also, the age-limit was raised from sixteen to eighteen, but this was directed chiefly at girls who, the Home found, were often ill-equipped to fend for themselves at sixteen.

The school soon became a regular high school, elementary school, and, after 1924, kindergarten. It developed a band, which attracted quite a lot of acclaim, and by the early 1920's, despite Mr. Johnson's earlier disclaimers, was fielding both boys' and girls' athletic teams in football, baseball, basketball and track. Those were the days of the Orphanage League, probably the toughest conference in North Carolina, which produced several All-Americans. Johnny Allen, the Yankees'

children's home. According to Mills Home records, Johnny was a student from 1913 to 1922 and even then was a baseballer. The girls' basketball team was very properly dressed in middy-blouses, black stockings, and baggy bloomers reaching below the knee, which was also the costume of the Girl Scout troop.

Dr. Spilman calls the first ten years of Dr. Kesler's reign "years of expansion." This is certainly true if one takes into consideration the founding of Kennedy Home, which will be recounted in a separate chapter, but actually the rate of expansion at Mills Home was somewhat less than it had been in Mr. Boone's time. Numbers in Mr. Boone's time had almost tripled in ten years; in Dr. Kesler's first ten years they rose only 47%, from 307 to 450 and by 1927 had increased to 500. With 114 at Kennedy Home and 365 in Mother's Aid, the count was only 21 short of 1,000, a figure which was finally reached in 1932.

Perhaps the most substantial expansion was in the number of staff. In 1910, five years after Dr. Kesler became General Manager, it is reported that the staff numbered thirty-two, twenty-five women and seven men. Twenty years later there were seventy-five staff members at Thomasville and nineteen at Kennedy Home. Those at Thomasville included twenty-



Mrs. Johnny Allen presenting the Johnny Allen Scholarship.

and later the Indians' pitcher who, curiously enough, is claimed as an alumnus both by Mills Home and another



Faircloth Dining Hall, early 1900's.

nine matrons and assistant matrons, fourteen teachers, sixteen heads of departments and sixteen others. The ratio of staff to children on the Thomasville campus alone had improved from 1:12 to about 1:7.

Mr. Boone had built five new cottages in ten years. Only two were added from 1905 to 1915 — the West Chowan Cottage, known generally as "W. C." which was built in 1912 largely through the fund-raising activities of a Mr. J. W. Boone, not to be confused with the former general manager, Mr. J. B. Boone, and the Miles Durham Nursery, for children



Miles Durham Nursery group.

two to six, donated by Mr. J. A. Durham of Charlotte. The "W. C." cottage was constructed largely from materials obtained by the demolition of the old Lassiter Building, which was no longer in use. The Lea Chapel was also converted into a private residence.

Four other buildings were, however, constructed. An auditorium was made possible through the will of Dr. S. W. Little of Clarksville. It was used both as a church building and for public meetings, and was completed in 1915. Interestingly enough Dr. Little, although a religious man, was neither a Baptist nor a member of any other church.

Then there was a need for a new infirmary. Two early substantial donors to this project were Mrs. Jeanette Brown and Mrs. Jacob F. Parrott. The building was to cost \$8,000, of which about half was on hand, and to raise the rest of the money needed, Mrs. Charles R. Whitaker and Mrs. B. W. Spilman divided the state between them, and secured the needed amount. Another contributor and effective solicitor was Mrs. Margaret Shields Everett of Greenville, and in view of the work of these devoted women the building was named "The Woman's Building." It was completed in 1908. Among the contributors were the children of the Odd Fellows Orphan Home in Goldsboro.

The third building to be erected was a new Industrial Building, which was completed in 1911, and the fourth was a new barn, in 1906. Also a new arbor was brought from Mocksville, where local churches had long maintained an "orphanage picnic ground" as a money-raising device for the orphanage.

There were, however, many improvements on the campus during this time. Dr. Kesler, soon after his arrival, had done much to beautify the grounds. He removed a number of old wooden sheds that had encumbered the campus, cleaned out the ditches, filled in the old cesspools now that the Home had a sewerage system, graded gullies and gashes in the ground, planted shrubbery and laid out walks and drives. In 1908 he brought electricity to the campus replacing kerosene lamps and candles. In 1907, a stonemason, Mr. W. A. Cooper, who had been a supporter of the Home since its beginning, arrived with thirty headstones, each with the name of a child who had died at Mills Home and had been buried in God's Acre on a little knoll south of the campus because their relatives could not make their own arrangements.



God's Acre.

Also in 1907, the Southern Railroad built a belt line around the city of Thomasville and a spur into the orphanage grounds, which greatly facilitated the bringing in of heavy freight. Thomasville was just becoming a manufacturing town, chiefly of shoes and furniture, but for a number of years it had no

water supply, and so purchased water from the orphanage for twenty cents a thousand gallons. A further convenience or source of comfort occurred when the West Chowan Association, the year before it built "W. C.", asked Mr. J. W. Boone to raise funds so that every child at the orphanage should have a comfortable mattress to sleep on. These mattresses were of felt, rather than of straw. Each child had about fifty square feet of floor space in the sleeping quarters. There is no mention, as there is in many homes, of children sleeping two and three to a bed.

The period following the World War I saw three more cottages built, as well as some other important buildings. This does not include the rebuilding of the Simmons Nursery, which burned in 1921. Cottages now cost from \$15,000 to \$25,000 to build, whereas in 1895 \$1,500 would build a cottage. The new Simmons building was financed from regular income, with no large donor apparent. In 1922 the Reverend J. H. Hutchinson became the sponsor of a new cottage, for



Hutchinson Cottage — Mills Home.

which he had put aside \$25,000 two years before. Next in time was a girls' cottage built from funds from the estate of Mr. H. B. Downing, and named after him. Finally Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Green of Mocksville built the Green Cottage for boys. This was also the time when Dr. Kesler was adding kitchens and dining rooms to the existing cottages.

Another building during this time was the Barnes Administration Building, funds for which were provided from the estate of Mr. R. R. Barnes, even though he had neglected to mention the orphanage in his will. His widow, Mrs. Frances Barnes, and his son, Mr. K. M. Barnes, were convinced,



Downing Cottage — Mills Home.



Barnes Administration Building.

however, that a bequest to the orphanage was intended and set aside \$7,500 for that purpose. The building was completed in 1920. Four years later Mr. and Mrs. Charles Haywood give the orphanage a building to house the Kindergarten. In the same year, the orphanage had called a full-time pastor, so a home was built for him. In 1929, Mrs. H. S. Stokes honored

her father, a well-known pastor by the name of H. A. Brown, by building a new and larger residence for the General Manager, the former wooden structure being moved across the campus to become a staff residence.



Staff residence built in honor of H. A. Brown.

1919 was the year in which the Home was named after Mr. Mills. Mr. J. W. Lambeth of Thomasville erected an arch, with the new name lit by electricity, over the entrance to the Home. Perhaps the most appreciated gift, by the children at least, in that year was the swimming pool, the money for it being raised by Mr. J. D. Wilkins and Mr. J. A. Durham.

Dr. Kesler had inherited a debt of something over \$11,000, the result of the water and sewage systems. Receipts for the first year of his tenure were \$36,500 and the per capita cost of care for a child about \$6 a month. But World War I was followed by a surge of inflation and then a financial collapse which affected the orphanage almost as much as did the Great Depression that began in 1929. By the mid-twenties receipts had climbed to near the \$200,000 mark, after a decline to \$140,000 in the worst recession year, and the per capita cost of care had quadrupled and was now \$24 per child per month. When the Great Depression struck, receipts fell off and a new debt accumulated. The orphanages overspent \$24,000 in 1931 and \$32,000 in 1932.

The institution's funds came from various sources. The shoe shop, the farm and *Charity and Children* all earned money, the last showing a profit of nearly \$8,000 in 1919-20. Bequests and gifts were extremely valuable — the most notable during this time that did not involve a building being one from Miss Zollie Montague for \$24,000 — but unpredictable, and often

earmarked for special projects. The endowment earned some interest. From 1926 onward, The Duke Endowment provided some funds. But the major source of operating income were once-a-month collections in Sunday Schools, quotas agreed on by churches at associational meetings, often for a specific object, and the annual Thanksgiving Offering, which Dr. Kesler urged should represent one day's income for each donor.

These sources were too valuable for the institution to surrender them in return for a share in a cooperative budget. Many people gave to an orphanage in addition to their contribution to the church's other educational or missionary programs, and Mills Home therefore decided not to share in the results of the great Seventy-Five Million Campaign which the denomination launched in 1919, although it accepted its share of the expenses.

In 1925 Dr. Kesler gave his Board four bits of advice. He thought that they should not establish any further branches. Perhaps he found supervising Kennedy Home somewhat wearing. He believed the farm to be a liability. He wanted more investigation of children's situations before they were accepted into care, and he wanted better salaries for his matrons.

The Board of Trustees, still self-perpetuating, had remained pretty constant during the Mills and Boone administrations. A few of the original members had died — J. W. Oliver, for instance, in 1890, T. H. Pritchard in 1896, and R. D. Fleming in 1898 — and had been replaced, but the Reverend John Mitchell was still its president when Dr. Kesler was appointed. At Dr. Kesler's death, only the Reverend Thomas Carrick remained from the original Board. Dr. Mitchell died in 1906 and was succeeded as president by the Reverend W. R. Gwaltney, who only lived to serve one year. Then F. P. Hobgood, also a member of the first Board, was elected and served as president for seventeen years as had Dr. Mitchell. E. F. Aydlett, who had come on the Board in 1902, then took over the presidency but had served only three years when, as has been recounted, he was not reappointed by the State Convention.

Several long-time Board members began their service while Dr. Kesler was General Manager, and might have served even longer terms if they had not been victims of the rotational system which was introduced in the early forties. C. L. Haywood, J. L. Noel, and J. H. Canady, appointed in 1908, 1911, and 1912, respectively, each served for thirty-four years. J. B. Stroud for twenty-nine, and the author of the first history, B. W. Spilman, for twenty-five. Toward the end of Dr. Kesler's time, the Board broke with tradition in the appointment of the

first woman board member. She was Mrs. Bess D. Scott, a daughter of J. A. Durham, who served for ten years. A second woman, Mrs. Beeler Moore, was appointed the next year.

Death also took during this time two long-time Board members who had served as officers of the corporation. E. F. Aydlett died in 1930, after twenty-eight years on the Board, and Stephen McIntyre, the Board's attorney, after twenty-seven years in 1925.

The one long-term employee to die was the man who had cleared the ground and dug the foundation for the first cottage, Mr. L. E. Peace, who died in 1909.



Dr. Kesler with staff (seated, left to right) DR. M. L. KESLER, general manager, ARCHIBALD JOHNSON, editor, *Charity and Children*, and F. B. HAMRICK, treasurer. The ladies included (left to right) MISS SALLIE McCRAKEN, office secretary; MISS EULALIA TURNER, lady manager, and MISS HATTIE EDWARDS, director of social service.

Among the employees of the Home there were four who began their work under Dr. Kesler and were to serve for 25 years or more. One was Miss Hattie Edwards, who served for thirty-six years as teacher, lady manager of Kennedy Home and Social Service Director, with one short interruption. The second was C. M. Howell, who came to the Home as a child at the age of eight in 1893, learned printing under N. B. Moore in his eleven years at the Home, and returned to the Home at the age of twenty-four to take charge of the Print Shop. He retired in 1950 and wrote the Alumni Column in *Charity and Children* until his death in 1956. During his management of the print shop, he made more than \$150,000 in profit for the

Home. Miss Mary Cook, universally known as "Cookie," served twenty-nine years as Matron in Fleming Cottage. One should also not forget F. B. Hamrick, who served as field agent, business manager of *Charity and Children* and Treasurer of the orphanage for seventeen years, and then on his leaving to become bursar of Meredith College, was appointed to the Board of Trustees and served another thirteen years.

Two senior staff members served during the whole of Dr. Kesler's reign. Miss Eulalia Turner had come to the Home in 1899, and on Dr. Kesler's coming took the position of Lady Manager, which she held for thirty-nine years. Archibald Johnson served thirty-nine years as editor of *Charity and Children*. For some reason the original text on the masthead was discontinued in favor of "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalms 121:4) which would seem to emphasize the work required to keep the institution in operation. It is also noticeable that at that time most of the advertisements were for patent medicines which claimed cures for nearly every ill to which flesh is heir, particularly "female troubles."

The first attempt to organize an Alumni Association was made on the occasion of the Home's Silver Anniversary, which occurred in 1910. The Association lasted only two years. When the United States went to war in 1917 at least forty alumni served in the Armed Forces, and four lost their lives. Among these was a young man with the memorable name of Adlai Stevenson, although whether he had any connection with the two-time Presidential candidate is not recorded. Young Stevenson had hoped to be a missionary in the foreign field. Another casualty was the brother of C. M. Howell, the printer.



John Arch McMillan.

Up until 1925 the Home shared a pastor with the Thomasville church, but in that year it called the Reverend E. Norfleet Gardner to the orphanage church alone, although he also had other duties. Four years later the Reverend J. A. McMillan became both pastor and assistant editor of *Charity and Children*, and when Mr. Johnson died he took over the editorship.

On August 19, 1932, Dr. Kesler was one week short of his seventy-fourth birthday, still vigorous, and with no apparent thought of retirement. He was returning late at night from a speaking engagement, and had stopped at the railroad cross-

ing opposite Watson Avenue to allow a slow freight train to pass. For some unknown reason his car rolled forward and hit the train. Although neither he himself nor his car received any apparent serious injury, his heart stopped beating.

During his tenure, Dr. Kesler had seen the number of children cared for by the orphanage, inside and outside its walls, and in two homes, reach a total of one thousand, making it second only to Buckner Orphan Home in Dallas as the Baptists' largest social service organization and had gained a national reputation both for himself and for the Homes.

# Kennedy Home — The First Thirty Years

Before he resigned in 1895, Mr. Mills had recommended that the orphanage decentralize. His interest was in keeping the institution at Thomasville small — not more than 150 children, although he may have had in mind the inaccessibility of Thomasville to the Eastern part of the state. Twenty years before he had tried to establish a branch of Oxford Orphanage in Mars Hill but this experiment did not last long.

The Board of Trustees had not gone along with Mr. Mills' plans. By the time the orphanage did establish a second campus, 175 miles east of Thomasville, the number of children at Thomasville was over four hundred, and seventeen years had passed. Nor was the second campus the idea of the Board,

although Dr. B. W. Spilman and a newly-elected Board member, Mr. Herman Canady, may have had such an idea in mind and certainly grasped the opportunity when it presented itself. The two men had married sisters, nieces of Mrs. William Lafayette Kennedy, the mistress of Cedar Dell house and farm, in Lenoir County, between Kinston and LaGrange.

In 1912 Mr. Kennedy was sixty-six years old and childless. He and his wife began to consider what they should do with their 1,200-acre farm. Mrs. Kennedy's first impulse was to leave it to Chowan College, of which she was an alumna, but, although the Kennedys were not members of any church, many of their friends and relatives were, and they were occasional attenders at the Kinston Baptist Church, where they had access to *Charity and Children*. They became interested in the orphanage. They consulted Dr. Spilman, and as a result of their deliberations a proposal was made which was unusual in three respects: one, that the Kennedys were not church members; two, that instead of leaving their farm to the orphanage in their wills, they proposed to donate it immediately, reserving for themselves the right to live in the house during their lifetimes and receiving an annuity during that time; and three, that the whole matter be kept secret until the Board of Trustees agreed to the plan. Until the proposal



Dr. B. W. Spilman.



Cedar Dell, the home of the William L. Kennedys.

was formally presented to the Board, only Dr. Hobgood, the president of the Board, the Board's attorney, Mr. Stephen McIntyre, Dr. Kesler, Mr. Noah Biggs and, of course Dr. Spilman knew what was occurring.

The deed was registered on May 14, 1912, and the immediate concern was to erect buildings, although Mr. Kennedy continued to farm the property through 1913. As might have been expected, the first building was a girls' cottage donated by Mr. Noah Biggs, on condition that someone or some group would provide one for boys. Mr. Canady took up the chal-



Biggs Cottage — first cottage at Kennedy Home.

lenge, called a meeting of prominent citizens of the county, irrespective of denominational allegiance, began the process with a substantial gift of his own and Lenoir Cottage was the result. By the end of 1913 the Home was ready to open, and Mr. Hartwell Scarborough was ready to assume the position of first superintendent of the new Home.

With two Homes in operation it might be assumed that Dr. Kesler would become a sort of federal president, supervising two Homes through their respective superintendents, but in actual fact he continued to manage the Home at Thomasville directly — he lived on its campus — and it was thirty years before the Thomasville Home was to have a superintendent of its own. Even then she had less authority, and considerably less salary, perhaps because she was a woman, with the General Manager on campus, than did the superintendent of Kennedy Home. Mills Home, as it was to become, operated with a "Lady Manager" as second in command throughout

the time of Dr. Kesler and part of that of his successor. For all of Dr. Kesler's time and six years beyond it, the Lady Manager at Thomasville was Miss Eulalia Turner, who had served in that capacity from 1899. But now Dr. Kesler had an added responsibility. Nearly every week, and sometimes even twice a week, he took the night train, after a day's work, to Kinston, worked there all day, took the night train back, and was in his office in Thomasville next morning.

Beyond the fact that he organized a Sunday School before the first child arrived, little is recorded of Mr. Scarborough's superintendency. It lasted only a year, and for the first five months of this time, there were no children on campus. The first children, transfers from Thomasville, arrived on June 5. Five days later there were eighteen in the Home. At that time there were the two buildings, Mary Biggs, which was also used as a dining hall and a place for religious services, and Lenoir, one room of which was used as a schoolroom. There was a girls' housemother, Mrs. C. W. Dunn, a teacher, Miss May Cooke, and a farmer, Mr. Herman Sutton. Who took care of the boys is not recorded.

The second superintendent, the Reverend G. L. Merrell, also did not last very long. He served for exactly two years. Again, very little is recorded about him or his ideas, but during his superintendency there occurred one of those beautiful happenings that needs to be remembered as part of the Homes "saga" or tradition.

Mrs. Kennedy, not content with having been co-donor of the ground on which the Home was built, obtained her husband's concurrence to sell the diamonds he would give her each year on the anniversary of their marriage and erect a cottage in memory of her father, Pinkney Hardee. Perhaps she foresaw her approaching death, when diamonds would mean nothing to her, for shortly afterwards she fell terminally ill, but how few would dispose of gifts of such sentimental value for such a cause? It then became a race between the builder, who was aware of the situation, and Mrs. Kennedy's hold on life. Work on the building was speeded up. On May 10, 1918, the Kennedys were informed that it had been completed. Mrs. Kennedy thanked the builder and on that very night she died. Death had also claimed Mr. Noah Biggs, only ninety days after he had presented the Mary Biggs building to the Home at its official opening on September 15, 1915.

In June, 1917, the Board of Trustees began to raise the necessary funds to build a chapel on the grounds. The building did not come into being until 1919, and included three classrooms. Religious services were under the direction of the Cedar Dell Church.



Cedar Dell Church.

Kennedy Home had three superintendents before it had been in operation three years. During Dr. Kesler's general management it was to have five. The third man, the Reverend Theo B. Davis, was to stay at the Home for six years. It is clear, however, that during those early years, much of what happened at Kennedy Home was decided in Thomasville. Dr. Spilman comments on how fortunate it was that Dr. Kesler was there to provide the superintendents with the wealth of his experience.

Kennedy Home did not at that time control its own admissions. Children were admitted at Thomasville, a process that included a preliminary stay in the infirmary, and were sent to Kennedy Home to fill vacancies there. Later, children were sent directly to Kennedy Home, but the decision on admission was made at Thomasville. Moreover, throughout Mr. Davis' time, children were transferred back to Thomasville to enter High School. Kennedy Home was not therefore so much a Home to serve the Eastern part of the state — there is no suggestion that children were assigned on a geographical basis in relation to where their relatives lived — as an overflow home to take care of additional children. Dr. Spilman saw this as not very satisfactory but the best that could be done under the circumstances. He does, however, record one very touching incident. Two sisters were living, one at Thomasville, one at Kinston, when the older girl fell fatally ill. Miss Turner asked the dying child if there was anything she could do for her. The child asked to see her sister. Miss Turner was able to reassure her that her sister was already enroute from Kinston.

Dr. Kesler did at one time make the suggestion that Ken-

nedy Home should be primarily agricultural in its teaching of children, and Mills Home industrial and mechanical, but this does not seem to have been a criterion for the admission of children. He also saw transfers between the Homes useful as a tool in discipline. A boy or girl in trouble in one home might get a new start in another. Dr. Spilman also notes that a number of other farms were offered to the Orphanage by would-be givers, but were declined for lack of funds to maintain them. Yet he dreamed of a children's home in the Blue Ridge Mountains, a dream that was only to be fulfilled after more than fifty years and twenty years after his death.

Mr. Davis was known as a builder. During his superintendency the chapel was completed, a laundry built, the superintendent's house enlarged, a dairy barn added, a small office, a swimming pool and a potato curing house installed. The central dining room in Biggs Cottage was discontinued and kitchens and dining space were provided in each of the buildings. Ten tenant houses were moved from the center of the campus to the banks of Falling Creek. Dr. Spilman remembers Mr. Davis as "a very bundle of industry." Yet apparently there were problems of adjustments, which Dr. Spilman does not specify but which may also have lain behind the earlier resignations.

In March of 1924, Mr. Davis resigned to return to the pastorate at Zebulon, from which he had come, according to Dr. Spilman, or to edit his own newspaper, according to Mr. Reed. The Board turned to an experienced administrator in the person of Raymond Franklin Hough, Sr., who later



Raymond F. Hough, Sr.

became Superintendent of the Virginia Baptist Children's Homes. Mr. Hough was at the time of his appointment, prin-

cipal of Sylva Collegiate Institute, where he was assisted by his younger brother, the Reverend Joseph Carl Hough. When the Orphanage laid claim to the elder Mr. Hough, the School replaced him with the younger, a process that was to be repeated four years later, for when Virginia called on Franklin Hough, Sr., he was replaced at Kennedy Home by his brother Joseph.

R. F. Hough was a widower when he came to Kennedy Home. He had two small boys, Raymond Franklin, Jr., and Mac Johnson. Franklin, Jr., followed his father at the Virginia Baptist Children's Home. R. F. Hough, Sr., remarried soon after coming to Kennedy Home. The family lived for a while in a small cottage near the Biggs building, called Lone Cedar Lodge, but shortly afterwards a larger home for the Superintendent was built. Another building erected in Franklin Hough's time was a new cottage for older girls, and brought in a number of additional older girls from Thomasville. There is a pleasant note in Mr. Hough's Annual Report for 1926. "More and more," he wrote, "I am persuaded that one of the fundamental principles in the training of children is that they should be happy." Mr. Hough was also an expert farmer, and he greatly improved the Home's farming operation.



Joseph C. Hough.

On June 10, 1928, the Reverend Joseph Hough took his elder brother's place as superintendent of Kennedy Home. He was to remain for fifteen years, the longest tenure up to that time of any Kennedy Home superintendent. He was a graduate of Wake Forest who had early adopted a career in religious

work. He worked for a while in the State Convention's Sunday School Department in Mitchell and Watauga Counties, served under his brother at Sylva Collegiate Institute, followed him there as principal, and then moved East to become Principal of Moss Hill School, almost at the door of Kennedy Home. He was planning to move to Charlotte when the call came to Kennedy Home. It was while he was at Moss Hill that he was ordained to the ministry.

When he arrived at Kennedy Home, the William Croom Moore Infirmary was in process of construction. This was the bequest of Mrs. Jacob F. Parrott, named in honor of her first husband. Besides being an infirmary, it was used as a cottage for fifteen of the older girls.

Also during his time, the Canady Building and the office building were erected. In 1930 Mr. and Mrs. Hough moved into Cedar Dell itself, Mr. Kennedy having died. Mr. Hough's major contribution to the Home, however, would appear to have been in what he did to continue his brother's upgrading of the farm. Kennedy Home had always essentially been a Home with a farm, 600 acres of it. Under Joseph Hough a dairy herd was developed and a beef herd begun. Old barns were torn down and new two-story barns built. A mill house and a number of silos were erected. The farm was converted from its early use, under the Kennedy's, in growing cotton and tobacco, to producing food, feed and fertilizer. Mr. Hough also grew wheat, which was supposed to be impossible in Eastern North Carolina.

It was Mr. Joseph Hough who solved the problem of the obligatory transfers back to Thomasville to complete high school. He arranged for high school children to attend the La Grange school, an unusual arrangement for that time, when every orphanage had its own school. A few years later Kennedy Home became the first children's home in North Carolina to send all of its children to public schools.

Mr. Hough's chief assistant during the whole of his superintendency was E. W. Brogden, superintendent of buildings and grounds, who served for twenty-eight years in that capacity, and in other ways for seven more. He was a fine example of the employee who, although he was not directly in charge of children, had a great influence on them, not only as superintendent of the Sunday School, but informally as well.

The number of children grew rapidly at Kennedy Home. The population reached 50 in 1916 and topped 100 by 1924. By 1930, there were 136 children in care and the population remained at about that number for several years. In 1935 and 1936, two new cottages were built. Mr. Canady again

challenged local donors to build a new cottage, giving the largest donation himself. Dr. Spilman also donated \$14,000 towards the erection of a cottage to be named the Mozelle Pollock Building in honor of his first wife. Dr. Spilman was at that time President of the Board of Trustees. He had sometime previously decided to make his home on the Kennedy campus, and had occupied first an office building and then an apartment in the Moore Infirmary. In the new cottage he also had an apartment and it is strange to find in the Board minutes detailed agreements between the President and the Board worked out and the cost of the cottage recorded in full. Dr. Spilman was a very active President of the Board, making numerous suggestions at each Board meeting. It was at the Mozelle Pollock cottage that he met and married the housemother, Miss Esther Ward, after which they reconditioned the old office building for their home.

It was during this time that he kept a diary. He records in some details the happenings in Mozelle Pollock Cottage, even the quarterly chore roster, the death of one girl, the father of another forbidding her marriage and her breaking off her engagement, his reluctance to report another for a sexual escapade, his distress when one of his favorites was disrespectful to a matron and his dislike for one matron's using the dinner hour to lecture girls. He was always driving girls to go shopping, to catch trains or to go to picnics. On one occasion the girls put on a fish fry, which Dr. Spilman saw as an excuse to have boys visit, but remarked that he thought "a bit of mix-up of boys, girls, and fish would not hurt anything." The girls were by no means treated impersonally. Dr. Spilman loved each one of them and was a confidant for their love-affairs. Mozelle Pollock, with only twelve girls, most of them seniors, must have been a cottage well ahead of its time and somewhat like the "preparation for independence" cottages that are common today. Dr. Spilman lived for another ten years, dying in 1950. A biography of him entitled *The Sunday School Man* has been written by Dr. C. Sylvester Green.

In 1938 Kennedy Home took a big step forward when the Board authorized it to have its own caseworker. Miss Elizabeth Smith became its first caseworker the following year.

However things were not entirely happy at the Home. Mr. Hough was finding it difficult to coordinate his operations with that of the agency as a whole. In 1938 the Executive Committee of the Board complained that he acted too independently in financial matters, obligating the agency without proper clearance and selling farm products, using the



Weston C. Reed.

money for unauthorized purposes. They felt he had ignored their attempts to define his authority, and recommended that he be released. At the next Board meeting, perhaps influenced by Dr. Spilman, the Committee withdrew its recommendation. Five years later, when perhaps coincidentally Dr. Spilman was no longer on the Board, the Board voted to request Mr. Hough's resignation and by unanimous vote elected Weston C. Reed to the superintendency of Kennedy Home.

# I. G. Greer—From Orphanage to Children's Home

If anyone could be said to exemplify the finest product of Southern church-centered culture, it was Isaac Garfield Greer, to whom the Board of Trustees turned to head the work of the Orphanage on Dr. Kesler's death. No one who ever met Ike Greer could doubt his integrity, his dedication or the steadfastness of the principles by which his life was guided. At the same time he was kindly, genial and in his day perhaps the best loved man in the whole State. At one time the Republican party tried to prevail on him to run for Governor. He was a story-teller, a singer of folk ballads and at the same time a man of vision, an able administrator and possibly the greatest money-raiser for benevolences North Carolina Baptists have ever had.



Dr. Isaac G. Greer, Fourth General Manager and General Superintendent, 1932-1948.

In appearance Dr. Greer could have sat as a model for an idealized Baptist deacon, with his silver hair, his long, lean face and his black suit, yet he was always surprising one with the progressiveness of his spirit. The present writer remembers vividly an incident in the 1950's, long before the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill accepted black students. At a meeting of children's home workers on that campus a black man had been, rather surprisingly, chosen by a group of white houseparents to represent them on the then almost forbidden subject of children's sexual development. Dr. Greer, then in his seventies, born and raised in a culture in which such an occurrence would have been unimaginable, had only one comment to make: "It occurs to me to thank Almighty God that I have lived long enough to see it." An alumnus expresses both the stature and the humanity of the man. After speaking of the love, concern, vision, courage and sincere humility of "our late giant, Dr. I. G. Greer" and saying how great a privilege it was to grow up at his feet, the writer adds: "I remember so vividly his taking the time from his busy, pressing schedule, during the dark, depression years, to ride a frustrated little boy (me) piggy back."

Isaac Greer was a mountain boy, born and raised on a farm in Watauga County. He attended local schools in Zionville and Boone, but did not graduate from the University of North Carolina until he was twenty-eight. As did many men who were later to be leaders in the State, he worked his way through college by waiting tables. Later he took some graduate work at Columbia University. He taught for two years in a one-teacher school in his native county and then joined the faculty of Appalachian State Teacher's College (now Appalachian State University) where he taught in the History Department for twenty-two years. During his time in Boone he served as an alderman for the city, represented the county for one term in the State legislature, was moderator of the Three-Forks Baptist Association and, in 1928, was elected to the board of Trustees of the Baptist Orphanage. His doctorate was a Doctor of Laws awarded by Wake Forest University in 1942.

Dr. Greer came to the Orphanage at the age of fifty-one. He was to serve it for fifteen years as General Superintendent (the title was changed from General Manager in 1935). They were not easy years for the Orphanage, spanning as they did,

both the Great Depression and the Second World War. When Dr. Greer came the orphanage was running a deficit each year; nearly \$24,000 in 1931 and more than \$32,000 the year after.

How completely Dr. Greer reversed the orphanage's financial situation can be seen from the figures on current income and expenses during his tenure. In 1931 receipts, to the nearest thousand dollars, were \$199,000 and expenditures \$223,000. A year after Dr. Greer took over, and as the Depression deepened, receipts had fallen off to \$170,000 but expenses had been cut almost thirty percent and were now only \$158,000. Quite how this was done is not clear. Salaries were cut, but only about ten percent. A number of loans made by the agency were foreclosed or guaranteed through the Home Owners' Loan Corporation. Dr. Greer was able to get the State to pay the salaries of teachers for six months of the year, and the number of children receiving Mother's Aid was greatly reduced, from 356 in 1930 to 48 sixteen years later. This was partly made possible by the State and later the Federal government assuming much of the load.

Despite these economies, or perhaps because of them, the Orphanage did not seem to have suffered what many of its sister institutions did. No cottages had to be closed for lack of funds to maintain them, and, as far as it can be ascertained, no staff dismissed. So successful were the economies and Dr. Greer's ability to stimulate donations — it is said that he never asked for money, but simply presented the need in his eloquent humorous way — that receipts began to climb much more rapidly than expenses. By 1939, they were back at their former level, and by 1943, they had almost doubled. Receipts for that year were \$357,000 and expenses \$241,000, and two years later the figures were \$483,000 and \$311,000. Even in the wartime economy expenses had risen only forty percent and receipts more than one hundred and forty. During his time he built the endowment fund from less than \$500,000 to more than \$700,000, but, more significantly, the operating fund, or working capital, from less than \$17,000 to more than \$600,000.

The farms also flourished. In one year they produced more than 10,000 bushels of various grains and more than tons of pork, beef and chicken.

The Depression and the War years were not those in which one could expect much building. Nevertheless, three cottages were constructed, two of them, as already reported, at Kennedy Home. The new cottage at Mills Home was built by funds from the estate of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Huffman, added to by the Huffman's children. The original bequest had been received in the late 1920's and Dr. Kesler had wanted

to use it for a new home for the General Manager, but the Huffmans' children believed that their parents had intended it for a cottage. Mrs. Stokes had resolved the problem by building the new home for the General Manager, but the Huffman cottage was not built until 1940.



Huffman Cottage — Mills Home.

In addition, during this time, the Perry Morgan Library was built at Kennedy Home, and later remodeled as an administration building, and the Barnes building at Mills Home was also enlarged and remodeled. In 1937, the roads at Mills Home were hard-surfaced. The orphanage acquired two new bits of property, the Martin farm, by purchase in 1934, to add to its pasture land at Thomasville, and the Wall farm in 1943, including a residence built by the sons of the original donor, C. M. Wall.

The second World War does not appear to have affected too deeply the program of the Home, although, of course, no new buildings could be erected during this time, and maintenance must have been a problem. The Home did have to purchase Dr. Greer's and Mr. Hough's cars in order to get new tires for them. The Home's records show that 312 boys — Mr. Reed does not mention girls — who lived at the Home served in the Armed Forces. Twelve are known to have lost their lives. Their names are listed in the appendix.

Dr. Greer did much to modernize the policies of the institution. Under Dr. Kesler the Homes were still orphanages, despite the fact that the number of orphans needing care was declining rapidly, due to medical advances following the First

World War. In 1926, the percentage of children in the Home both of whose parents were living was six percent. By 1942 it was twenty percent and by 1948 twenty-seven, as compared with sixteen percent full orphans. There was increasing recognition that the children who had no family of their own belonged in foster family homes rather than in institutions. Dr. Greer recognized that children were in need for other reasons. No longer would a child be turned away because he or she was not an orphan. In 1939 he wrote:

There are at least three classes of children who need this type of service; first, those who have lost their parents, and have no people to care for them; second, the children whose parents are incapable or not interested in giving them the necessities of life; and, third, those who have had their homes wrecked on account of sin. So long as there are broken homes, we will be justified in caring for dependent children through some form of service.

The last phrase in this statement is significant, for one of the things that Dr. Greer did was to begin a foster care program. The Home made one placement in 1933, six in 1934 and seven in 1935. By 1946 there were sixty children in foster care. In 1937 the Home reported:

Since we have been able to reduce our number of Mother's Aid Families, due to the State's assumption of much of this care under the Aid to Dependent Children program, we are hoping we can place more children in foster homes. This is a field of service in which we need a greater part. There are a great many children that would not adjust well in an institution that can be cared for in properly supervised foster homes.

Later he defined these as the very young child, the physically handicapped child, the nervous child and the shy or timid child. During most of Dr. Greer's time the majority of the children were of elementary school age. Only fifteen percent were in high school in 1946.

Dr. Greer also strengthened greatly the institution's work with the parents of the children in care. He did so principally by enlarging the social work department from one person with a half-time secretary to seven social workers and two clerical persons. In 1937 a committee of the Board had criticized the department as being "very weak" and had asked for an investigation. Miss Hattie Edwards became director of social service, and served until 1945, when she was succeeded by her niece and assistant, Mrs. Louise Blake, who had come to the Home a year before.

Work with parents was no longer confined to the necessarily hurried decisions or adjustments on applications which Miss Edwards had carried out so efficiently in the past. Not only were plans more carefully made, but the service was extended to the parents after the child was placed. In 1945 Dr. Greer wrote:

Much time has been spent in trying to save the homes and in trying to help families work through their problems so that the children will not have to come to the institution. By this method we have rendered service to approximately 300 children besides those brought under our care. By this means we have been able to extend a definite service to well over 1000 children.

Another phase of this work which has proven gratifying is that of working with the families of children in the institution toward re-establishment of the home and the child's ultimate return to his family and community. In years past it was thought best by some institutions to keep a child until he finished school or was grown. Our aim is to re-establish the home and by this means we not only help the child but his family. Sometimes we work with the family for several years before we feel the home is a safe place for the child to return to; after his return we supervise him until he appears to be adjusted.

This was progressive thinking in the 1940's. It also began to lay emphasis not so much on the number of children in care as on the number served. Dr. Greer was not interested in increasing the number of children in institutional care. As a matter of fact he reduced it, from 691 in 1932 to 608 in 1948, despite having built three new cottages on the new campuses. Part of this was due to a move to reduce the number of children in each cottage. The Home had been criticized by the Duke Endowment in 1936 for having from 24 to 30 children in a cottage, which, even at that time was considered too many. By the end of Dr. Greer's time the average was more like twenty. The Home was also evaluated in 1941 by a committee consisting of Howard W. Hopkirk, Executive Director of the Child Welfare League of America, Marshall Pickens, of the Duke Endowment, and E. P. Allredge of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Dr. Greer's philosophy about service to the child and to his family is encapsulated in a statement that he made to his staff shortly after he took office:

The Mills Home is not primarily interested in farming, dairying, gardening, sewing, housekeeping, and the



Mills Home laundry boys.

like, as important as they all are. These things are only secondary to the real task of fitting boys and girls to become useful Christian citizens of the state. The child is more important than the farm, the house, the school or any of the Church organizations. The child does not exist for these things, but these things exist for the child. The child must not be broken to fit an organization, but the organization must be made to work for the best interest of the child.

It might be added that this philosophy is not one that can be implemented cheaply. Mr. Reed, in his book, cites as evidence of Dr. Greer's concern for the children that the per capita cost of care per month nearly quadrupled during Dr. Greer's superintendency, from less than \$21 per month to more than \$78. Given Dr. Greer's acute business sense, one knows that the money was well spent.

Another area in which Dr. Greer introduced progressive ideas was that of benefits and training for the staff. The staff was expanding rapidly. By the end of Dr. Greer's time it numbered 134, of whom 15 were in general administration, 10 employed by *Charity and Children*, 71 worked on the Thomasville campus and 38 at Kennedy Home.

In 1935 he brought the staff under the Baptist State Con-

vention's Relief and Annuity plan, and in 1937, for the first time, houseparents were given a day off each week. Previously they had worked all seven days. He was also instrumental in helping Duke University to establish a training course each summer for child care workers. There had been sporadic attempts to provide training for child care workers since the early 1920's, but this was the first organized curriculum offered by a college or university. It was discontinued when wartime restrictions on travel made it impossible to administer.

After the War, Dr. Greer approached the School of Social Work of the University of North Carolina, and, in company with Howard Hopkirk, the Executive Director of the Child Welfare League of America, helped to found the Chapel Hill Workshops for institutional personnel. The Workshops became in time the nearest thing that the country has had to a national conference of workers in children's homes, attracting registrants over the years from 19 countries, 48 states and 5 Canadian provinces and serving more than agencies. In 1965, the Chapel Hill Workshops established an annual lecture honoring Dr. Greer as the founder.

It is curious that most of the people who held responsible positions under Dr. Greer were hold-overs from Dr. Kesler's regime, and a great tribute both to them and to Dr. Greer that the development from orphanage to Children's Home took place essentially without major changes in staff. R. D. Covington was treasurer of the Home until his death in 1947. Archibald Johnson was editor of *Charity and Children* when Dr. Greer came and died two years later, but he was succeeded by J. A. McMillan, who had come to Mills Home as pastor of the church and assistant editor in 1929. C. M. Howell, foreman of the print shop, preceded Dr. Greer by seventeen years and outlasted him by two. C. C. McKoin, farm manager,



Charley C. McKoin.



E. W. Brogden.

had been on the job a year when Dr. Greer came to the Home and died in Dr. Greer's last year. Miss Hattie Edwards had served as director of social service since 1923, and in other capacities for fourteen years before that, and did not retire until 1945. Perhaps her job changed the most during Dr. Greer's fifteen years. Miss Sallie McCracken had been there throughout nearly all of Mr. Boone's time, all of Dr. Kesler's, served throughout Dr. Greer's, the terms of the next two superintendents and ten years of a third. E. W. Brogden was building superintendent eleven years before Dr. Greer and also outlasted him.

There were three major appointments during the first twelve of Dr. Greer's fifteen years. They were those of the Reverend J. A. Neilson as the first full-time pastor of the Mills Home church, in 1934, Sarah Elmore, who replaced Eulalia Turner as Lady Manager at Mills Home in 1939, after Miss Vera Atkins had held the position for a year, and was given the title of Superintendent in 1943, and W. C. Reed, who succeeded Joseph Hough as Superintendent of Kennedy Home in the same year.

Mr. Neilson remained for twelve years and during that time baptized 502 children into the church. He was succeeded by J. O. Walton. Miss Elmore served for eleven years, and then took a position with the State Commission for the Blind, in the course of which she died in a car accident. Mr. Reed was seven years at Kennedy Home, and then was promoted to General Superintendent. During his years at Kennedy Home, he made a great number of improvements in the plant at Kennedy Home. All the buildings were completely renovated and the number of children in each cottage reduced. Bathrooms were installed on the second floor of all cottages, central heating introduced, stainless steel sinks placed in all kitchens and each cottage redecorated and refurnished. Kennedy Home became in fact more of a modern institution than its parent institution at Thomasville.

There were, of course, some retirements. B. F. Crutchfield retired from the dairy after twenty-seven years, and Beatrice Council from the library after thirty. Three long time matrons also retired. Mattie Hardy (twenty-nine years), Lettie Mizelle Britton (27 1/2 years) and Bertha Calloway (23 1/2 years), while one who was to serve twenty-four years joined the staff in the person of Maebell Doughton. Other houseparents who are remembered from that time include Mrs. Ola Nipper and Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Hillard.

The school at Mills Home prospered under Dr. Greer's reign. It had three principals, Mr. W. L. Bowman, Mr. A. C. Lovelace, and Mr. Romulus Skaggs, who was to serve for six-



Romulus Skaggs.

teen years until the school was finally closed. The coach for most of the time was C. A. Kearns, who made the Mills Homes teams feared in the Orphanage League and elsewhere. A defeated opponent was quoted as saying, "Those boys at Mills Home don't have any mothers or fathers, and they don't care if they do get killed." This was not, of course, true, but says something of the type of discipline Mr. Kearns was able to induce. It should also be recorded that in 1938 the orphanage graduated a boy, "Pat" Preston, who was later to be All-American at Wake Forest and to play for the Chicago Bears.

On campus Dr. Greer was considered a liberalizer. For the first time the girls were allowed to go down town, unaccompanied but in pairs. They carried passes in case they were met



1947 Mills Home Agricultural Class.

by orphanage personnel and were allowed one hour for the double trip and their errands, but boys and girls were still strictly segregated. They could meet for one hour on Sunday afternoon and one hour each on Monday and Friday summer evenings in the valley.

It was not until 1948 that the Baptist State Convention ruled that a Board member, having completed the four-year term of office for which he was elected, could not immediately succeed himself. Therefore, throughout Dr. Greer's term there were a number of Board members who served continuously throughout most of that period. Eleven men and one woman served for at least ten years of that time, some of them having been on the Board for a considerable time previously. They were F. B. Hamrick, a former treasurer of the Home, who died in 1943; H. S. Stokes, who served the whole fifteen years; Robert A. McIntyre, the Board's attorney; J. H. Canady, a major benefactor of the Home; Dr. Glenn Choate; Dr. Zeno Wall, who served most of his years as Chairman and was to succeed Dr. Greer for a short time as General Superintendent; John T. Coley; J. W. Noel; Thomas P. Pruitt; Charles Shields; T. H. Brodyhill, also to be a major benefactor; and Mrs. Bess Scott, herself the daughter of a former Board member. In all, in Dr. Greer's time, thirty men and three women served on the Board. The occupations of eight of them have not been recorded, but of the remaining twenty-five only three were pastors and one a pastor's wife. Ten were businessmen, of whom one, Waldo Cheek, later became State Insurance Commissioner. Five were attorneys and the others a physician, a farmer, a college president, a big landowner, a merchant and a school administrator. Earlier Boards had been more heavily ministerial.

Two fairly substantial benefactions at this time came from the M. E. Laughenhour estate, worth \$22,000, and from the gift of a farm, worth \$19,000, by Mary and Victoria Galloway. Also in 1939, a proposal was made that the Home take over the South Mountain Institute, but this was considered inadvisable.

There were apparently no serious epidemics among the children in those years. The health of the children was looked after, for most of this time, by Dr. P. M. Sherrill, who never charged the Home for his services and would make visits even at night. He, too, was killed in a car accident, as had been Dr. Kesler and Miss Elmore. It was perhaps somewhat sur-

prising that the Home did not lose more of its staff to accidents on the road, considering distances driven. Dr. Greer once told the present writer that he had driven 89,000 miles in a single year on orphanage business.

On December 16, 1947, Dr. Greer resigned, but continued to be active in raising money for the Home. He was immediately elected President of the Board of Trustees, in effect changing places with his successor, Dr. Zeno Wall. He accepted the position of Executive Vice President of the Business Foundation at the University of North Carolina and remained its principle officer until 1954. Later he played a large part in the founding of the Group Child Care Project (now Group Child Care Consultant Services), which was an offshoot of the Chapel Hill Workshops, which he had helped found some ten years before. He visited the Workshops every year until his death in 1967, at the age of eighty-five, the last time in a wheelchair, and was a most welcome guest at the Workshop parties, where he would sing folk ballads, accompanied by his wife on the dulcimer. He married twice, first to Miss Willie Spainhour, the marriage lasting forty-three years, and then, in his declining years, to Miss Hattie O'Briant, who nursed him through his last long illness.

Dr. Greer has been memorialized by the naming of a building at Appalachian State University, the recreation building at Mills Home, the Greer Home at Chapel Hill, and the Greer Lecture at Chapel Hill in his honor. As long as anyone lives who knew him, his true memorial will be in their hearts.



Dr. I. G. Greer.

## Dr. Wall and Mr. Reed



Dr. Zeno Wall, Fifth Administrator, General Superintendent, 1948-1950.

When Dr. I. G. Greer resigned as General Superintendent, the Board of Trustees elected its Chairman, Dr. Zeno Wall, to take his place. Dr. Wall, who had a doctorate from Mississippi College and the Th. M. from Southern Baptist Seminary, was one of the premier churchmen and preachers in the state. For twenty-three years he had been pastor of the First Baptist Church in Shelby, which was one of the larger churches in the state, and had twice been president of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention. He had also served as Chairman of the General Board, as interim President of Gardner-Webb College, and had been a member of several national organizational boards. Why he accepted the position of

General Superintendent of the Baptist Children's Homes is not easy to discern. He was already sixty-five years old and during Dr. Greer's administration a mandatory retirement age of sixty-eight had been enacted for all employees. The best guess is that he expected the position to be less onerous and perhaps less involved in church politics than what he had been doing. Weston Reed reports that Dr. Wall found at the Home ten times the problems he had encountered in his previous church at experience. He had also lost the sight of one eye, but assured Mr. Reed that a person of his position could see more with one eye than he should.

A major decision that was made during Dr. Wall's administration was that of sending the seniors and juniors to Thomasville High School. This began a movement that in three years led to sending all the children at the Mills Home to the public schools. Kennedy Home was already following this practice. Also, during Dr. Wall's tenure, a proposal to promote the work of the Children's Home and the Homes for the Aging under one general program was debated by the Board of Trustees and rejected with only one dissenting vote.

The Board, during Dr. Wall's tenure, was much affected by the Convention's ruling that a Board member could not immediately succeed himself. A large proportion of Board members served only one four-year term, or sometimes even for a shorter time. Along with these were Edwin Lanier, Mayor of Chapel Hill and later the State's Insurance Commissioner, and W. W. Stanley, Director of Public Welfare for Durham County and the first professional social worker to serve on the Board. The only long-time Board member to be elected during this time was James E. Conrad of Winston-Salem. Mr. Conrad served for twenty-one years, with the exception of every fifth year when he was rotated off, and was for a number of years Chairman of the Board.

There was little time for building during Dr. Wall's two years. The locker plants at Mills Home and Kennedy Home, which had been contracted for during Dr. Greer's administration, were completed. The plant at Mills Home was called the Broyhill plant, after the chief donors, and the one at Kennedy Home was named the Brogden plant, after the long-time building superintendent. In the meantime, Mr. Reed continued to renovate the Kennedy Home campus. This included

lowering the highway so that the water drained away from the cottages, and installing a new water system. Kennedy Home also built a new cottage, jointly financed by the Columbus Baptist Association and the estate of Mrs. Florence Cannon. It was named Columbus-Cannon Cottage. Dr. Spilman's last residence, Brokenhurst, was converted into a cottage for twelve girls. These extra facilities made it possible for Kennedy Home to reduce the number of children in each cottage from twenty to twelve.

The senior staff which Dr. Greer had left served throughout Dr. Wall's time, with the exception of Mrs. Louise Blake, who resigned to accept employment with the State Department of Public Welfare. She was succeeded by B. T. Fleetwood. J. A. McMillan, the editor of *Charity and Children*, had died in 1949, so his daughter, Miss Louise McMillan, was elected interim editor. At the end of Dr. Wall's administration, Miss Sarah Elmore, Superintendent of Mills Home, also left the program, as did Mr. J. D. Fraley, who had followed R. D. Covington as treasurer. Mr. W. C. Reed was superintendent of Kennedy Memorial Home at this time.

It was to Mr. W. C. Reed the Board turned for its next General Superintendent, the only promotion to that position from within the organization that has occurred.

Weston Reed, like I. G. Greer, grew up on a farm in the mountains, but in Mr. Reed's case the farm was near Sylva. He attended what is now Western Carolina University and then Wake Forest, where he took his B. A. in 1925, at the age of thirty-two. Prior to going to Wake Forest he taught for nine years, mostly in small schools in the mountains. Early in his teaching career he had married Mellie Parker, and from that time on the Reeds were a team. One cannot talk about Weston Reed without thinking of Mellie, also.

On graduation from Wake Forest, Mr. Reed continued to teach. He was President of the Sylva Collegiate Institute, served as principal of the Laboratory School at Cullowhee, as principal of Sylva High School, and later held a similar position with the Balls Creek Consolidated Schools in Catawba County. After twenty-nine years of teaching he became, for little more than a year, pastor of the First Baptist Church at Maiden, North Carolina; during his tenure as



Weston C. Reed, Sixth Administrator, General Superintendent, 1950-1958.



Mellie Parker Reed.

pastor he was called to Kennedy Home in 1943 as Superintendent. Like Dr. Greer, he was primarily an educator. His work as General Superintendent was, in many ways, a continuation of Dr. Greer's. He shared many of the same ideals, and under his and Mrs. Reed's leadership, the Baptist Children's Homes became more and more a home for children rather than an orphanage. He was a gentle, saintly man but at the same time was practical and a good administrator. Those who knew him found him to be a most genial and loving friend. He was also extraordinarily generous. His daughter tells of an alumnus about to enter Wake Forest College informing Mr. Reed that he could not go to school unless he could buy a typewriter, but he had insufficient funds. Mr. Reed immediately gave him his own typewriter.

Mr. Reed did many things to increase the quality of life at both Mills Home and Kennedy Home. As early as 1951, he closed the school on the Mills Home campus and sent all of the children to the public schools; he said, "they were just normal boys and girls like all other children." In the same year he ceased to admit children of pre-school age to group care. These two moves were in keeping with the best thinking in the field of child care at that time. In his first year he managed to reduce the maximum number of children in any one cottage from twenty-four to twenty, and by the end of his administration had reduced the number to eighteen, with the normal range being from twelve to sixteen. He spent a good deal of money making the "Valley" between Mills Home's two avenues into a recreational area, with a skating rink, tennis courts and a swimming pool. He also added lighting for nighttime activities, which proved a great blessing on summer

evenings. He renovated all of the cottages at Mills Home, as he had done earlier at Kennedy Home. Bathrooms were installed on the second floors where the children slept — previously in a number of cottages children had to go down to the basement to go to the bathroom at night — reduced the number of children in any room to four, provided closets for the children's clothes and redecorated everywhere.

He might be called the "Great Renovator." During Dr. Wall's superintendency and the last years of Dr. Greer's, the cottages had been allowed to fall into bad repair. The Child Welfare League of America, which had made a study of Mills Home in 1951, had recommended that all of the cottages be replaced. The Executive Committee of the Board authorized Biggs, Whitty and Mitchell, the first three on the girls' side which had stood for more than sixty years, to be torn down and new cottages built in their stead. But that would have made it impossible for other cottages to be improved and for Mr. Reed to develop recreational facilities on which he had set his heart. He therefore asked permission to show what he could do in the way of renovation, using Biggs Cottage as a model. So thoroughly and so imaginatively was this done, that it was found unnecessary to replace any of the cottages, and Howard Hopkirk of the Child Welfare League was high in his praise of the "new" living arrangements. A great deal of money had been saved and yet the desired result achieved.

The building program at Mills Home was greatly facilitated by bequests from a brother and sister, Robert and Lelia Mae Idol. By the time the Home was ready to use the money the assets, largely in Reynolds Aluminum, had appreciated so that the Home received nearly a million dollars. Out of this was built a beautiful new church building named in honor of the Idols' mother, Sarah Maston Idol; a new infirmary named for Lelia Mae Idol; and a print shop named for Robert Idol. This was in accordance with the testators' wishes. There was still money to spare, and accordingly the I. G. Greer recreational facility was built. The money could not quite stretch to a swimming pool but the remaining funds necessary to construct this part of the recreational program was contributed by one of the trustees, Mr. Ed Broyhill. The organ for the church was the gift of Mrs. Bess Durham Scott, the daughter of Dr. J. A. Durham, one of the home's early trustees, and other gifts for the church were received from Miss Sallie McCracken (the lights on the steeple), Mr. Robert McIntyre, trustee (the chimes), Mr. Cy Harrington, an alumnus (pulpit and foyer furniture) and the Alumni Association (the speaker system).

The Idol buildings may be said to dominate the Mills Home



Mills Home Valley.



Mills Home Church.



Mills Home Infirmary.

campus, but in an extraordinary loving gesture the Home kept fresh the memory of the man whose benefaction had made possible the old church and school auditorium which now had to be torn down to make room for the new church. As Mr. Reed writes, "it is only fitting" that the Home build a cottage in honor of the late Dr. Little. Built for twelve girls, it was "little" both in fact and in name.

Meanwhile building was also going on at Kennedy Home. Kennedy Home built a new church at about the same time as did Mills Home. The funds for it came from the estates of two unrelated ladies named Parker — Miss Augustine Parker and Mrs. Corine Parker. Miss Augustine might have left the home enough and more to have built the church herself, had not, or so it was said, one Sunday a minister preached a sermon criticizing the Roman Catholic Church. This offended Miss



Mills Home Print Shop.



I. G. Greer Recreational Building.



Little Cottage — Mills Home.

Parker, who, although Baptist, believed in honoring the beliefs of any part of the Church Universal, so that she never attended church again, but divided her estate between the Baptist child care work, the Salvation Army, and Father Flannagan's Boys' Town in Nebraska. Anti-Catholicism was still strong in North Carolina until a much later date, as witness editorials in the *Biblical Recorder* during the 1960 Presidential campaign.



Kennedy Home Church.

Kennedy Home also built a pastorium, a swimming pool and two cottages during this time. The pastorium was built with the help of two estates, those of Sallie Barker, dating from 1938, and Mrs. Varina Cheshire. Here again the Trustees and the administration demonstrated their generosity and sense of fairness. A couple had cared for Mrs. Cheshire for the last two years of her life, but she had been too ill to alter her will in their favor. After her death, her friends alerted the Home about the situation, and it was agreed to allow the couple to continue to live in the Cheshire home and to give them \$3500 to put it into good repair.

The swimming pool was paid for from the bequest of Mary V. Jones, and the two cottages with a gift from C. W. Bunker,

a great-grandson of one of the original Siamese twins, Chang and Eng. By virtue of an unusual arrangement with a Mr. H. C. Ferebee, the Home loaned Mr. Ferebee money to complete the Ferebee cottage, after his initial gift, so that the cottage could be built in his lifetime. The picture at this time is of a Board and a Superintendent who were both imaginative and compassionate.

Mr. Reed was a man willing to seek and take advice. He was the opposite of the know-it-all superintendent that some homes suffered from at this time. When the Greer Recreational Center was being planned, he relied heavily on the experience of Dr. Harold Meyer, of the Recreation Department of the University of North Carolina, and Dr. Ralph Andrews, director of the State Recreation program. Mr. Reed early invited the Child Welfare League to review his program. He was faithfully attended the Chapel Hill Workshops for Institutional Personnel, of which Dr. Greer was the principal founder. He shared Dr. Greer's interest in a better-trained staff and not only sent his workers to these workshops, but also spearheaded a move that was to provide training and consultation to more than 300 agencies in 30 states and in Canada. Fortified by a Board of Trustees' request to explore founding an agency comparable to the Child Welfare League in the South, and as chairman of a committee of the Southeastern Child Care Conference having much the same idea, Mr. Reed approached the School of Social Work of the University of North Carolina asking them to employ a consultant to be paid by the participating agencies who would contract with the School for the consultant to provide training sessions. He had obtained the support of twenty other agencies in the Southeast, helped obtain a beginning grant from the Duke Endowment, and when Alton M. Brotan was chosen as the new project's first consultant, entertained the heads of all the agencies and introduced him to them. Thus began what is now Group Child Care Consultant Services with its fourfold function of consultation, training, research and publication. Mr. Reed was the first Chairman of its Governing Board. Actual consultation to Mills Home was provided for various reasons by the present writer, who was asked to supervise the project, even before the service was formally established. Mills Home became indeed a sort of experimental laboratory for teaching houseparents and for the scientific study of group care. The first sociograms of cottage groups were made there in 1954.

Mr. Reed also began the practice of hiring young promising social workers, often from the seminaries. After a year of employment, he would send them on scholarship to the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina



Dr. Alan Keith-Lucas during a Mills Home training session.

with the commitment to serve the agency for a certain time period after receiving the graduate degree. A number of prominent social workers today began their careers under this program, including J. R. Ball, Afton Quinn, William Satriet, Berniece Limer, Carolyn Winberry Phillips, and Dorothy Canipe. The social work program of the Home expanded greatly in Mr. Reed's time. Dr. Greer had enlarged it from two to eight; Mr. Reed raised the number to sixteen professionals, and for the first time Kennedy Home had its own director of social service, in addition to three social workers. Mr. Reed believed in the benefits of social work. One of his last recommendations to the Board of Trustees was that the Homes should place social workers in strategic places over the state to work with the parents of children and local pastors, a plan that was fulfilled by Mr. Reed's successor. Mr. Reed saw plainly the need for graduate study and professional social workers.

This need was in part due to the changing nature of the problems bringing children to the Home. Even before Mr. Reed became General Superintendent, of 522 children being cared for at Mills and Kennedy Homes, only 84, or sixteen percent, were full orphans, and 148, or twenty-eight percent, had both parents living. By 1952 the percentage of orphans had fallen to twelve percent and by the end of Mr. Reed's time it was only five percent. The name of the agency was changed from the North Carolina Baptist Orphanage to the Baptist

Children's Homes of North Carolina in 1956, at a time when many other orphanages were also changing their names.

The number of children in group care had declined from 608 to 522 during Dr. Wall's short reign. This trend continued under Mr. Reed. By the end of his tenure the total number of children at Mills Home and Kennedy Home was 419. This was largely due to the smaller number of children in each cottage, in addition to Mr. Reed's interest in the foster home program, which increased from 60 children in 1950 to 197 in 1958. Mr. Reed persuaded the Duke Endowment to include the foster care service along with group care in their annual grant for orphans and half-orphans. Mr. Reed once told the writer that in the future he hoped there would be as many children in foster family homes as there would be on campuses. At that time most children in foster homes were transferred to one of the institutions on reaching the age of six.

The first two years of Mr. Reed's tenure were marked by an almost complete replacement of senior staff, except in two instances where Mr. Reed recalled former workers who had served under Dr. Greer. Virtually the only holdovers were Van Richardson, farm superintendent at Mills Home, who was to serve the Home for thirty-one years, and C. B. Johnson, who was to serve for nineteen years in a similar position at Kennedy Home. The new staff formed a formidable and dedicated corps of workers. Every one of the nine administrative people Mr. Reed recruited in those years outlasted his administration.



Van Richardson.



C. B. Johnson.

Miss Sarah Elmore, Superintendent at Mills Home, retired at the same time as Dr. Wall. Mr. Reed chose C. A. Kearns as the new superintendent for Mills Home. Mr. Kearns had

been a teacher and coach at the Orphanage under Dr. Greer but was then teaching and coaching in Burlington. He was a typical coach, strict but fair, essentially kind and entirely loyal to the organization. He served throughout Mr. Reed's term, but resigned shortly afterwards to return to the public schools, where he had teams to coach once more.

There was also a vacancy for a superintendent at Kennedy Home, occasioned by Mr. Reed's promotion. In keeping with what was now almost a tradition the Homes turned to a farmer who had become a teacher from somewhere in the mountains



Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Smith.

to fill the job. W. A. Smith, although born in South Carolina, had worked with the Federal Government in the field of agriculture and had been assistant principal of South Mountain Institute, which was more a children's home than a boarding school. He had thus both farming and child care experience, and Kennedy Home, with its large farm, needed both. His wife, Virginia, was a registered nurse, and was elected Assistant Superintendent to help him.

*Charity and Children* had not had a regular editor since Arch McMillan's death and the orphanage really flew high in its search for a replacement. Although he was little known at the time of his appointment, Marse Grant, at that time editor of the *Morganton News Herald*, was to become a power in



J. Marse Grant.

Baptist polity in the state, first as editor of *Charity and Children*, the circulation of which increased from 36,000 to 52,000 under his editorship, and then as editor of the *Biblical Recorder*.

Social service, also, needed a new director. Mr. B. T. Fleetwood had been drafted into the Armed Forces. He was replaced for a short time by Mr. F. J. Herring, and then Mr. Reed recalled Mrs. Louise Blake, who had held that position for five years under Dr. Greer; by now she had an additional two years' experience as child care institutional consultant to the State Department of Public Welfare.

The treasurer's job was also vacant with Mr. J. D. Fraley having resigned. Mr. Reed recruited Riman E. Muth, whose wife, Frances, was a graduate social worker. Mrs. Muth became the first director of social service at Kennedy Home. Later she became director of the casework center in Chapel Hill. Both R. E. and Frances Muth died before their retire-

ment, R. E. not long after moving to Chapel Hill in the early 60's, and Frances, who had joined the staff of North Carolina Memorial Hospital, very suddenly in 1983.

Four others who formed part of Mr. Reed's team, in addition to Mrs. Reed, were their niece, Lucille Reed; Clyde Morris (and the contribution of Mrs. Morris should not be forgotten); William E. Sisk; and H. Willard Myers. Miss Reed had been her uncle's secretary at Kennedy Home, where she also served as director of the Training Union and choir director. She came to Mills Home as Dean of Girls, succeeding Mrs. B. T. Fleetwood, and, on Miss Sallie McCracken's being promoted to Research Secretary in 1952, became Mr. Reed's secretary again, as well as director of the Training Union and the church choirs. Mr. Morris is a fine example of a businessman turned child care worker. Although during Mr. Reed's time he served only as purchasing agent — he

bought everything for the Homes except the girls' clothing, which was Mrs. Reed's prerogative — Clyde Morris and his wife Ginnie eventually became the houseparents for the Maternity Home which was opened in 1970. Bill Sisk is an alumnus who had spent ten years of his childhood at Mills Home. He has worked as farm foreman, food manager, a unit director, and currently as manager of the Family Resource Center. H. Willard Myers was employed as the electrician at Mills Home and now serves as Director of Maintenance. Sisk



Ginnie and Clyde Morris.



William A. Sisk.



H. Willard Myers.

and Myers are the only members of Mr. Reed's team still working at the Home.

The houseparents are often praised as the "hub of the wheel" and as one of the most important groups on the campus, but they do not often get individual recognition. Their service is often seen as transitory. Mr. Reed lists the names of over 400 of those who served in the thirty-eight years his book, *Love in Action*, covers, which would be an average tenure of about three or four years. Yet he recruited a number of houseparents who not only served for fifteen years or more, but constituted one of the finest houseparent groups child care has seen. Six — five of them Reed appointments — of them were honored at the Chapel Hill Workshops in 1971 and given the epithet "great": Mrs. Thelma Hancock Frye Robertson, whom the present writer has described on numerous occasions as the "best reality-therapist" he has ever known, her sister, Mrs. Mae Arnder, Miss Imogene Wilson, Miss Mary Hedgecock, Mrs. Maebelle Doughton and Miss Estelle Crouch, while Miss Merita Hoggard was similarly honored from Kennedy Home. Nor should one forget the second members of the houseparent teams who served many years,

Miss Swannie McHargue with Mrs. Robertson, and Mrs. Sirenia Walker with Miss Imogene Wilson. "Swannie", as she was always known, served Mills Home for forty-three years. She and Mrs. Robertson still live together in Thomasville. Other houseparents who were outstanding at Mills Home were Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Helderman and Miss Lucy Pritchard, Mrs. Grace Frisbee and Miss Vida Hester.

Salaries at that time for houseparents were from \$100 to \$125 a month, plus board and lodging. In 1951, Mr. Reed had brought all the Home's employees under the Social Security system.

Church life on the campus in the beautiful new church was very much a feature of living at Mills Home, especially with Miss Lucille Reed's work with the choirs. J. O. Walton, who had followed Mr. Neilson as pastor and served from 1946 to 1952, was himself followed by the Reverend Isaac Terrell, who was to return to the Home twelve years later in another capacity. In 1956, an important appointment was made when Roger E. Williams, Jr., became pastor of the Mills Home Baptist Church. Later he worked in development and then became Superintendent of Kennedy Home. He proved to be a wise and thoughtful administrator as well as a most helpful and compassionate counselor and pastor.

Thirty-six persons served on the Board of Trustees in the eight years between 1950 and 1958. Of these, five were women. Twenty-four served for one term only. Of those who

were to serve for longer periods, five were holdovers from previous administrations: Dr. Greer himself served as Chairman until 1957, when he was succeeded by H. C. Philpott; William A. York, a future benefactor served for a span of

twenty-six years; J. A. Jones, the Board's attorney for most of his fifteen years on the Board (he died in 1962); and J. E. Conrad, who was also to serve as the Board's chairman. Those who served for multiple terms and were elected during Mr. Reed's time were J. E. Broyhill, a future major benefactor; A. G. Glenn, a school man who was much involved in the transfer of Mills Home children to Thomasville schools; J. A. Burris, who was of great help in the financial management of the Homes; Mrs. George McNeill, also a benefactor with a great interest in recreation; Robert Gatlin, who helped coordinate the Homes' farm programs; Nelson A. Hayes, an alumnus of both Mills and Kennedy Homes; and Charles Powell, businessman and dairyman, whose service spanned fifteen years. It was a Board of many talents and interests, much involved in the affairs of the Homes.

The Homes took another forward leap towards becoming a truly statewide organization in 1957. The Trustees voted to accept the Indian Orphanage at Pembroke into the Baptist Children's Homes' system. Odum Home, an Indian orphanage, which had been founded in 1942 by the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association, was in financial difficulties and its buildings had been condemned. At first the Homes suggested that the Convention take the Home under its wing, but in 1957 accepted financial responsibility and immediately began planning for a new building, which was to hold both boys and girls, the first co-ed facility to be constructed by the Homes. It was also during this time that the Board considered, but did not find practical, taking over the work of the South Mountain Institute. In 1949, they similarly declined to get into the business of a Home for the Aged.

The finances of the Homes were put in much better order under Mr. Reed. In 1954 the Homes had, for the first time, a realistic budget, largely at the insistence of Messrs. Philpott and Burris. A move to have the Home dependent almost entirely on the Cooperative Program, which would have cost the Home \$100,000 a year, was compromised through Mr. Reed's diplomacy. By the end of his tenure, the annual income was on the order of \$800,000 a year.

Mr. Reed retired in 1958, at the age of sixty-five. He remained active for twelve more years as consultant to the Homes, as Chairman of the Lenoir County Board of Public Welfare, as Governor of Rotary International District 773. He was working on his history of the Baptist Children's Homes an hour before he was stricken with a fatal heart attack. The Baptist Children's Homes had been especially blessed in having had two such saintly but practical men as Dr. Greer and Mr. Reed to guide them for so many years.



Roger E. Williams, Jr.

were to serve for longer periods, five were holdovers from previous administrations: Dr. Greer himself served as Chairman until 1957, when he was succeeded by H. C. Philpott; William A. York, a future benefactor served for a span of

## VIII

# The Wagoner Administration

## Initial Phase: 1958-1965



Dr. Walter R. Wagoner, Seventh Administrator, General Superintendent and President, 1958-1983.

The Committee of the Board of Trustees appointed to find a successor to Mr. Reed received many applications. It is said that they were not satisfied with any one of them. Dr. I. G. Greer had been asked by the Board of Trustees to serve as chairman of a Search Committee to find and recommend to them a new administrator. He was the communicating link between Walter R. Wagoner and the Board during the search period, and in later years was advisor and mentor for the new executive.

W. R. Wagoner was at this time forty years old, and the highly successful pastor of the First Baptist Church of North Wilkesboro. His doctorate was an earned one: a Ph. D. in Christian ethics and sociology. He had been born on a farm in the Piedmont, and had attended Mars Hill College before going on to Wake Forest College and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He had not applied for the position of General Superintendent but for many years had been a frequent visitor at Mills Home. Somewhat more formal in manner than either Dr. Greer or Mr. Reed — it took some time to get on a first name basis with him or to call him "W. R." — he was known as an able administrator who achieved what he set out to accomplish. The Board may not have realized it at the time, but in calling Dr. Wagoner they also were making available to the Homes the expertise and the energy of Dr. Wagoner's wife, Elizabeth.



Elizabeth T. Wagoner.

The story of the Wagoner administration falls rather naturally into three periods. In the first period, which covers the first eight years, Dr. Wagoner was making himself thoroughly familiar with his new field of endeavor. He continued to improve on the work that Dr. Greer and Mr. Reed had begun in making the Baptist Children's Homes one of the most progressive and productive children's programs in the South. He also

worked at bringing its services closer to everyone in the state, in addition to projecting its future.

The late fifties and early sixties were those years in which children's homes in the South achieved their most apparent success. The anti-institutional wave that was to call their work into question was still in the future. Population had only begun to decline because fewer children were placed in each cottage. By and large institutions were full, and had long waiting lists. Baptist Children's Homes was accepting only one out of five applications. While it was recognized that the children being accepted were more disturbed than they had been a few years before, the treatment of the emotionally disturbed child had not yet become the major mission of the Homes. Programs for such children were seen as desirable adjuncts to the main work of the institution, which was to care for the victims of family breakdown and, if possible, restore them to their families, but in the meantime provide them with as natural and as productive a living situation as possible. Great emphasis was placed on individualizing each child. Under Dr. Wagoner and his staff, the Homes prospered in this respect. The writer, somewhat later, wrote to the agency:

What impresses me at this time about the Baptist Children's Homes is the ever-increasing amount of knowledge, wisdom and thoughtfulness every member of its staff brings to the problems of the redemption of each child and his family. Dedication and love have always been present, but more and more a new dimension is apparent — informed, thoughtful, well coordinated and purposeful love and dedication on the part of every staff member, from administrator to social worker to houseparent to auxiliary staff.

The houseparent staff that conveyed this concern to the children was largely that recruited by Mr. Reed, but was now receiving much more training than heretofore. Much of the social work staff, however, was of Dr. Wagoner's creation. It was an unusual group, fifteen in number by 1963, six with the MSW degree and eight staff in graduate school. What made it almost unique was that nine of the fifteen were men, and five of these had a theological degree as well as their social work qualifications. For a while this was undoubtedly the outstanding social work department in the South. Moreover, it was no longer concentrated at Mills and Kennedy Homes. Mr. Reed had suggested the establishment of regional casework centers throughout the state, and Dr. Wagoner was quick to implement the plan. A center was established in Asheville in 1959, one in Chapel Hill in 1962, and by 1966

additional centers were in Charlotte and Fayetteville. These centers worked with families who were experiencing difficulties. Services from Baptist Children's Homes were now available nearer to where a family lived.

One wishes that this excellent team could have remained more or less intact, but young professionals have career goals of their own, and Dr. Wagoner expected so absolute a commitment to the interests of the Homes that there was little room for personal ambition. Gradually this exceptional team dispersed to take more responsible positions elsewhere, so that it became the pattern that the Baptist Children's Homes was the nursery for most of the outstanding social workers in the Carolinas and Virginia but not their eventual employer — a great service to other agencies.

It must be said, however, that the agency did everything it could to provide training. Among these it sent to school was the first man ever to take graduate work in the supervision of houseparents, Earle Frazier, from Kennedy Home, now Executive Director of Barium Springs Children's Home. The agency also provided the Director of Social Services with what amounted to a third year post-graduate work at the University of North Carolina. Among those who are "social work alumni" of the Baptist Children's Homes are Earle Frazier; John Ball, of the Graduate Social Work Program at East Carolina University; Afton Quinn, Director of Professional Services at the Methodist Home in Richmond, Virginia; Tom Savage, Director of Social Work at Epworth Home in South Carolina; Edwin Hadley, in private practice in Columbia, South Carolina; Gerald Southerland, who has served on the faculty of the graduate schools at Chapel Hill and at Greenville; Boyd Farmer, social worker with the New River Mental Health Clinic in Sparta; and from a somewhat later time, Parker McLendon, Executive Director of the North Carolina Child Care Association.

On the campus at Mills Home two new experiments were tried, both tending to enhance the quality of the children's life there. The year of 1960 saw the first cottage group established in which brothers and sisters could live together, and three cottages were remodeled to make it possible for them to house both boys and girls. This meant the end of the old division of the campus into a boys' and a girls' side, and resulted in a lessening rather than an increase in boy-girl problems, which had, as a matter of fact, been minimized by common use of the Valley. And for the first time high school seniors were permitted to work part-time off campus. Meanwhile the cultural life of the campus had been enhanced both by the establishment of the Charles F. Finch Music Foundation and

the building of the Spainhour Music Building, the gift of two members of Dr. Wagoner's former congregation, and by the building of the beautiful J. Leland and Margaret Sadler Library Building. Off-campus there was the construction of a cottage, the project of Mr. and Mrs. George McNeill of Morehead City and the Board of Trustees on Bogue Banks at Indian Beach, where children, staff, trustees, and other groups could have a place to which to retreat.



Spainhour Music Building — Mills Home.



Margaret Sadler Library — Mills Home.



McNeill Home — Indian Beach.

Dr. Wagoner did not intend that the agency should stand still. Early in his tenure he requested a review of the total program, which the writer and other consultants undertook in 1959.

Dr. Wagoner then spent considerable time in visiting children's homes in the North, as well as travelling to Europe and the Middle East. Mr. Reed said of him that he seldom missed any conference of note on child care that was held in the United States, and as a result he was soon recognized by all child care authorities as one of the most capable and knowledgeable men in the field. Almost from the beginning of his term he began to project future directions for the agency. At almost his first Board meeting he spoke of the need for increased support from the Convention. He also proposed an expanded foster home program — in 1961 he suggested 600 children in foster homes — new types of programs, regional casework centers which he implemented. A new departure in which Mrs. Wagoner's interest must have been great — she was taking graduate work in family and child development at the time — was that of instruction to churches in establishing day care centers. By 1963 he was able to be more specific, having, as it were, done his homework in researching possibilities. He listed nine goals:

1. An enlarged foster care program
2. Preventive services through the regional casework centers
3. A program for emotionally disturbed children
4. A pilot program in day care
5. A Home in the Western part of the state
6. A Homemaker service for families in crisis
7. A program for juvenile delinquents
8. Group Homes for older children
9. Service to black and other minority children

Progress on the first two of these was already underway, although the number of children in foster care never reached anything like 600. At most it reached 200, early in Dr. Wagoner's time, and thereafter it declined, despite three social workers assigned exclusively to foster homes. The preventive work done in the regional centers was somewhat generalized in nature, but on items 3 and 4 there were programs already underway. A plan had been worked out at Chapel Hill for a few children diagnosed as emotionally disturbed to receive outpatient treatment at North Carolina Memorial Hospital and this had resulted in the opening of the Greer Home, with the assistance of a grant of \$25,000 from the Duke Endowment. The 1964 Annual Report is taken up largely with a discussion of this program.



First Greer Home Residence, Chapel Hill.



Child Development Center.

At the same time, on the Mills Home campus, an educational building had been built in connection with the church. In this was housed the Child Development Center, a day care center with pre-school education, which not only served families in the Thomasville area, but also became a teaching center and model for church-sponsored day care throughout the state. In its first full year of operation it was visited by more than a hundred church groups, and in one subsequent year trained eight groups of pre-school teachers, including one

group from a Methodist church. By 1966 it employed six teachers, with Mrs. Wagoner as the director. From that time on it became an important part of the program.

The other parts of Dr. Wagoner's program had to wait for a while, although group homes for adolescents and the acceptance of black children were achieved in the 1970's, and will be discussed later. Homemaker service never developed, but a group home program for youth with special problems was established at Wall Home. A new dimension in social service was initiated when in 1963 the agency arranged through North Carolina's Children's Home Society for the adoption of nine children. A proposal that the agency take over and run a cottage for the mentally retarded at Graylyn in Winston-Salem had been considered but was not implemented. Meanwhile the new building at Odum Home had been finished and Chesley Hammond had become the third local superintendent. Statistics in 1965 showed 440 children in residential care — 266 at Mills Home, 135 at Kennedy, 22 at Odum, and 7 at Greer Home in Chapel Hill.



Odum Home dedication.



Odum Home's new administration building and cottage.



Three former superintendents of Baptist Children's Homes campuses included (left to right) W. A. Smith, Kennedy Home, 1950-68; Vernon S. Sparrow, Mills Home, 1959-1969; and Chesley Hammond, Odum Home, 1961-1968.

There were some changes in key personnel, as is only natural. Charlie Kearns resigned as Superintendent of Mills Home in 1959, and Vernon Sparrow was appointed to take his place. He had been educational director in the North Winston Baptist Church while Dr. Wagoner had been pastor. Later he became minister of education of the First Baptist Church of Lenoir. He was responsible for many of the more progressive policies on the campus. He served for ten years. He retired to Orange County to be among his kinfolks — the woods, they say, are full of Sparrows — and continued preaching until his death in 1984.

Mrs. Louise Blake also retired in 1963, having served the Homes at two different times over a period of nineteen years and having largely been responsible for the creation of the Social Service Department. Afton Quinn was promoted to take her place. Among the social workers who joined the staff during this time and who were to play significant parts in the history of the agency were Robert Stump, presently Coordinator of Social Work for the agency and the only "survivor" in the department from that time; Ellen Stephens, social worker both at Mills Home and at the Charlotte Social Work Center; Hugh Starnes, who was to be the first superintendent of Broyhill Home; Charlotte Browning and W. N. Brookshire, both future directors of the Mills Home Social Services Department.



Afton Quinn.



Robert R. Stump.



Walter Wood.



F. T. Bowman.

Other appointments during this time were Walter Wood as Assistant Superintendent at Mills Home and later as Director of Greer Home, Earle Frazier as Administrative Supervisor and Recreational Director at Kennedy Home, and Edwin Hadley as Administrative Assistant to Dr. Wagoner. Both Frazier and Hadley had social work degrees.

Riman Muth, Treasurer, moved to Chapel Hill in 1961 to work with North Carolina Memorial Hospital and F. T. Bowman was appointed his successor. Mr. Bowman still holds that position nearly a quarter of a century later. He is one of the stalwarts of the agency. In 1970 he was elected Chairman of the Southern Baptist Business Officers. Marse Grant left the editorship of *Charity and Children* in 1960 to become editor of the *Biblical Recorder* and was succeeded by John Roberts, who edited the paper for five years and then joined

the staff of the South Carolina *Baptist Courier*. Roberts was followed by Orville Scott.



John Roberts.



Orville Scott.

retired at the age of forty-six but continued until his death sixteen years later to write the alumni column for *Charity and*



Franklin Bailey.

The status of *Charity and Children* as the voice of the Baptist Children's Homes has been questioned many times. It is probably too successful a paper. In 1959 the Committee of Twenty-Five which had undertaken a review of all the State Convention's activities, recommended that *Charity and Children* cease to be a general religious paper and become a "house organ" for the Baptist Children's Homes. Nevertheless, the paper still carried news of all Baptist undertakings in the state and elsewhere, devoting one issue, for instance, entirely to the Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem and reporting on the Convention's decisions in detail. Yet in 1960 a move to have it represent officially all of the Convention's social causes did not materialize.

A number of long-term employees retired or died during this time. Both Mills Home and Kennedy Home lost their farm managers, Van Richardson by retirement at Mills after 31 years and C. B. Johnson at Kennedy by death after 19 years. Miss Mabel Bean, secretary to the Social Service Department since Miss Hattie Edward's time, when the two of them were the entire department, retired after twenty-five years. Mrs. Maebelle Doughton retired after twenty-four years and Miss Bess Carter, her assistant at Green Cottage, after thirty-one years. Miss Eva Faircloth, houseparent and sewing room supervisor retired after forty-three years; Henry Early, poultry farmer after thirty-four years, and one of the best known figures on the Mills Home campus, Worth Milsaps, the mailman, after forty-one years. Franklin Bailey, who compiled and edited the four pictorial volumes of the Home,

*Children*. A 1939 graduate of Mills Home, Bailey served as Scoutmaster of the Mills Home troop for twenty-four years. The present writer remembers vividly his contribution to a staff discussion of a child, for whom no one from superintendent to social worker to housemother could find a good word. "I don't care what you say," said Bailey. "That boy is the best manure-spreader the Home has ever had," and he proceeded to lecture the staff on not trying to turn alley-cats into Persians but rather teach them to be good ratters. It was remarkable how quickly everyone began to find good in the boy.

In 1960 there were eight men, mostly on the farm or in maintenance work, who had served Mills Home for twenty years or more. They served as models, particularly in the days when men in the cottages were rare and their ability to undertake a job and complete it was, for many boys and girls, the first time they had known how a responsible adult behaved.

On the Board of Trustees three men were appointed who rotated the chairmanship between them for the next twenty years. Carroll C. Wall, Jr., served four terms in that position, Dr. Olin Binkley and Raymond A. Stone three apiece. No other men have served so often. This is an interesting pattern, not followed by many homes, that assures continuity on the Board despite the rotational system. Others appointed for the first time during these years were D. E. Ward and Don Bryant, each of whom served a term as Chairman or President (the title was changed in 1967), and Paul Broyhill, son of the Home's greatest financial contributor. Three women were ap-



Carroll C. Wall, Jr.



Dr. Olin Binkley.



Raymond A. Stone.



Seventy-fifth Anniversary drama.

pointed during this time. The Board suffered a real loss when its attorney, J. A. Jones, died in 1962. After a short interim in which Mr. W. C. Reed's son, Olin, served, Judge William York became the Home's attorney.

In 1960 the Homes celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary. Part of the celebration was a play written by Charles Nisbet, which recounted the early history of the Homes. It was presented for the children and for the Baptist State Convention at Asheville. Staff members played the principal parts.

The staff, in 1965, numbered 187, of whom 12 were in general administration and 16 in the office of *Charity and Children*. Mills Home staff numbered 101, or 1 adult to 2.7 children, and Kennedy Home staff 47, with a ratio of 1 to 2.9.

Besides the new building at Odum Home and the cottage at the Greer Home, there were eighteen cottages for children on the Mills Home campus. The Culler Cottage was completed in 1960 as a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Culler, Sr., who had started a fund for that purpose fifteen years before. Eleven cottages were in use at Kennedy Home, the last of which was the Ferebee Cottage completed in 1960. There were other buildings on the campus — the Spainhour Music Building, the Sadler Library, the Child Development Center — and the administration buildings at both major campuses had been renovated, but there had not been any great expansion of the facilities. This was to come in the next phase of the Waggoner administration.



Culler Cottage — Mills Home.

# Years of Expansion and Leadership: 1966 -1977

The second phase of the Wagoner administration can be said to have begun when the agency began to employ Lloyd Wagnon as a consultant of development. Dr. Wagoner was among the first to begin to use Mr. Wagnon's services. During the 1965 Chapel Hill Workshops he invited the heads of other Homes to meet Lloyd Wagnon and learn about his services.

The phase could be called the phase of expansion, both in buildings and in new services. The record is a remarkable one. In the twelve years from 1966 to 1977, the Homes built a new campus in the Western part of the State, opened a maternity home in Asheville, as well as emergency care centers in Charlotte, Burlington, Forest City and Henderson. These centers were cooperative ventures with the local Baptist Associations and First Baptist Church in Henderson. The agency also established a group home on the Wall farm at Wallburg to give selected boys a different kind of experience for one year, which had a modified Outward Bound program focus.

Five new cottages were built on the Mills Home campus; three, plus an infirmary and a recreational building at Kennedy Home; three cottages, an administration building and a recreational center on the new Broyhill Home campus at Clyde; and a general administration building at Thomasville. The agency did this by first projecting a twenty-year long range plan, and then by two other localized campaigns for capital funds through the Founder's and Builder's Program in the West and the Ten Star Builder's Program in the East. To help do this it created, at Mr. Wagnon's suggestion, the position of Director of Development, a post that was filled for the first two years by Roger E. Williams, Jr., until then pastor of the Mills Home Baptist Church. Later, when Mr. Williams became Superintendent of Kennedy Home, W. Isaac Terrell, former pastor of Mills Home Baptist Church and former Board member, filled this position, which he held until 1983.

Such campaigns depend on individual and corporate gifts and bequests. Broyhill Home in Western North Carolina, which was begun in 1969 and opened in 1971, was built from the gifts of hundreds of donors as part of the Founder's and Builder's Program. The initial challenge gift of \$150,000 that made it possible was made by the Broyhill Family, and the



W. Isaac Terrell.

Home was named in the honor of J. E. and Sadie Broyhill. In addition to the initial challenge gift, the Broyhills continued to give additional substantial gifts to see the campus to its completion. J. E. Broyhill, father of the Congressman and of former Board member Paul Broyhill, has probably been the Homes' greatest financial contributor, although, if inflation be taken into account, it would be hard to match the contributions of Noah Biggs. The cottages on the Broyhill campus built during this time have been named the Western North Carolina, the Haywood County, the Wall, and the Richard Fleming Blanton Buildings, while the administration building is named for Dr. Wagoner and the recreational building for J. E. Broyhill.

The new cottages at Mills Home also resulted from individual gifts or bequests. York Cottage, built in 1966, and the first really modern ranch-type cottage at Mills Home, was financed by the York Foundation into which William York, for many years the Home's attorney, would put part of his annual tithe. It memorializes Judge York's daughter, Dorothy, who died in infancy. The Bright-Brown Cottage was the bequest of Dr. James Henri Brown and his wife, Bernice Bright Brown of Raleigh. The Stokes Cottage was built in memory of H. S. Stokes and in honor of Mrs. Stokes. A gift by their son, Colin Stokes, made this cottage possible. H. S. Stokes was associated with the Homes for many years as a member of the Board of Trustees and was the donor of the General Superintendent's home. The Craver Cottage was built with



Broyhill Groundbreaking — Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Broyhill and son, Congressman James Broyhill.



Carolina Cottage — Broyhill Home.

part of a munificent bequest of \$750,000 from the Clemmons-Lewisville area, where Dr. Wagoner had lived as a child, and was named for Spurgeon Craver. The last cottage built, Alumni Cottage, was the gift of many alumni. A campaign to raise these funds was conducted for four years in the pages of *Charity and Children*.

Little has been said about the loyal support of the Alumni Association, which has been a source of strength over the years, or of the annual Homecoming, which has drawn as many as two thousand to the Mills Home campus. They are, however, amply documented in Franklin Bailey's four pictorial



Broyhill Recreational Building.



Wagoner Administration Building — Broyhill Home.



York Cottage — Mills Home.



Stokes Cottage Groundbreaking — Colin Stokes and friends.

volumes. Incidentally, the new Alumni Cottage caused the demolition of the Watson and Mothers' Cottages. Two of the original four cottages remain in use as residences for children, and a third, Mitchell, the oldest of all, still stands but has been converted to a museum. Few homes have buildings so venerable.

On the Kennedy Home campus the Williams Cottage was made possible by the will of Mrs. Lanie Williams, who left her farm, which was sold in 1968, to the Home. The Bryant Cottage was built at the same time and by the same builders and was financed from the bequest of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Bryant of Aberdeen. Aydlett-Davis Cottage was the product of two bequests — those of E. F. Aydlett and Julia Jane Davis. The infirmary at Kennedy Home was largely paid for by the bequest of W. H. and Lula B. Jones, who had previously donated the chimes of the church. The recreation building was built with funds from the estate of Mr. and Mrs. C. I. Robinson. Roy Poole, contractor for the recreation building, made a substantial contribution toward the completion of the gym-



Stokes Cottage — Mills Home.



Alumni Cottage — Mills Home.

nasium. The recreation building carries the names of the Robinsons and W. C. Reed.

The McFarland General Administration Building used part of a most generous bequest of approximately \$1,000,000 left by G. A. McFarland. Like several other benefactors he was childless, and as with many others, Mr. McFarland had been visited by Dr. Greer and Mr. Reed for a long time before he died.

The hard work of Mr. Terrell, Dr. Wagoner and their predecessors and associates resulted in four bequests of over \$100,000 and seven others of more than \$50,000 in the ten years between 1966 and 1975. During the following decade there was one bequest of \$1.4 million, seven between \$100,000 and \$500,000 and twelve more of \$50,000 or more.

The opening of as many as four Emergency Care Centers was a pioneer effort on the part of the Homes, and brought



McFarland General Administration Building — Thomasville.



Maternity Home — Asheville.



Second Greer Home Residence — Chapel Hill.

the work of the agency directly in contact with a growing need. It represented a different use of group homes than had been originally planned. The emphasis shifted from the treatment of young emotionally disturbed children to the pressing problems of adolescents.

The Greer Home, although it had undoubtedly helped some children, never quite fulfilled its promise. Originally housed in two locations, one in Chapel Hill for boys and one in the country for girls, it was cut back to the girls' cottage in 1969, and in 1972, when its director, Mrs. Lyda Driver, resigned, it was closed. There were problems in coordinating service with the North Carolina Memorial Hospital, and plans for a more suitable building did not materialize. Even though this program did not grow, the experience helped the agency later to see the need to build a specialized camping program for boys.

The Child Development Center prospered, however, both

in numbers and in outreach. In 1972, it served 119 children. Something of a new concept was launched in 1974, when Dr. Elizabeth Wagoner became Director of Child Development and Family Relations. The area social work centers became Family Services Centers, and the preventive work of the agency was greatly strengthened. Another important move was the opening of the Maternity Home in Asheville in 1970. This again was a new departure for the agency.

Meanwhile there had been advances on the campuses. In 1970 Mills Home adopted a plan whereby juniors and seniors gradually assumed more responsibility for their own support, but Kennedy Home went further, and established a Work-Earnings-Responsibility Plan that began at age twelve which soon became a model for the entire country. It had several new features. It allowed for a child to be promoted or demoted on his job. It was progressive so that a child was not faced with the prospect of being suddenly or dauntingly responsible for himself at the end of his stay in the institution. His anxiety could be handled much earlier. The children themselves had a significant part in its formulation and management, and it completely revolutionized the attitude to work on campus. It received national attention when a description of it was included in the writer's and C. W. Sanford's *Group Child Care as a Family Service*. Its major architect was Melvin Walker, Director of Campus Life at Kennedy Home. Shortly afterwards Kennedy Home also initiated cottage-budgeting, which helped children learn how to manage money more realistically. It has always been a problem in children's homes that so much is supplied the children without their becoming aware of what it costs. In 1971 the agency's commitment to working with the children's parents was made evident in the holding of "Family Days" on each campus, when special programs for parents were held along with a picnic on the grounds and special entertainment.

The Baptist Children's Homes was beginning to have a national impact. The writer, reporting on the 1970 Chapel Hill Workshops noted, "At Chapel Hill one agency was outstanding in what it contributed from its wisdom to child care throughout the country" and that agency was the Baptist Children's Homes. Indeed its record at those Workshops, which had become national in scope, was most impressive. In the years from 1968 to 1977 three staff members were selected as workshop leaders, Roger Williams, Betty Beacham, and Lyda Driver; ten gave papers, Vernon Sparrow, Roger Williams, Melvin Walker, Blan Minton and Russ Vance; and five houseparents, Thelma Robertson, Roland Bailey, Beverly Hunter, Steve Little and Lyda Driver — and one alumna and social worker, Janice Lyda, contributed major insights in a panel of children's home alumni, as did three students, Penny Branch, Bucky Edwards and Sadie Pickelsimer.



Kennedy Home's Frontiersmen Camping Program.

Kennedy Home took another forward step when it established a modified therapeutic camping program with a base on the campus, something which experts did not believe could be done, but which proved quite successful under the direction of Russ Vance. The camping program was designed not so much for the juvenile delinquent but for the child who was chronically failing and always "behind the eight-ball". Also in 1975 a training course for foster parents was designed by Robert Stump and taught by Horace Hawes of Kennedy Home at the Lenoir County Community College.

In 1972 Mills Home undertook a systems analysis. The re-

sult was a unit system designed to bring planning for the child and his family closer to the child. The plan was abandoned after four or five years and Mills Home returned to a more centralized system. The agency as a whole was organized into three geographical administrative areas, with the superintendents of Broyhill Home, Mills Home, and Kennedy Home serving also as Area Administrators.

The Homes believed in staff training, not only on the campus, but in workshops and courses elsewhere. In 1970, for instance, there were forty-four people, more than ten per cent, of the total attendance, from the Baptist Children's Homes at one of the three weeks of the Chapel Hill Workshops. These included one Board member, Dr. Raymond Stone, seven administrators including Dr. Wagoner himself, ten social workers, nineteen houseparents, a nurse, the pastor at Kennedy Home, Rodney Beals, two staff wives and two students. At the same conference ten houseparents were awarded certificates for having completed 144 hours of class work over a period of two school years. The writer, as a representative of Group Child Care Consultant Services, also spent two days each month on the Thomasville campus and was officially listed in the Home's literature as consultant in child care to the agency. Other staff attended summer programs at various schools of social work throughout the nation.

There were some changes in key personnel. Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Smith retired in 1967, W. A. having been superintendent of Kennedy Home for seventeen years, and Roger Williams went to Kennedy Home as superintendent. When Vernon Sparrow's health forced him into retirement in 1969, J. Parker McLendon became superintendent of Mills Home. He had been pastor of the First Baptist Church of Elkin, and held the B.D. and Th. M. degrees from Southeastern Baptist Seminary. He served through 1976, leaving to become the first Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Child Care Association. Charles Bennett was later appointed as Resident Director of Mills Home. James H. Camp became Director of Campus Life at Thomasville, and Melvin Walker at Kennedy. Chesley Hammond retired as Superintendent at Odum Home and was replaced in 1969 by Tommy Swett and he in turn by Larry Sawyer. Greer Home had three directors: Walter Wood; Blan Minton, a social worker; and Mrs. Lyda Driver. In 1969 Hugh Starnes, a social worker, was appointed Superintendent-elect of Broyhill Home and Area Administrator of the Western part of the state. Afton Quinn resigned in 1968 as Director of Social Services and was followed, for a short time, by Leon Shoemaker. Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Morris went from the purchasing department to Asheville to become the directors



J. Parker McLendon.



Hugh Starnes.



James M. Lambert.



J. Max Evington.

of the Maternity Home, and found their real vocation there. In 1972 Robert Stump became Coordinator of Social Work and has continued to give leadership to this time. Horace Hawes went to Kennedy Home as the Eastern Director of Social Service. On Roger Williams becoming Director of Development, James Lambert became the pastor of the Mills Home Church. He served until 1973, and later was followed by J. Max Evington. In 1974 Huber Dixon succeeded Rodney Beals at the Kennedy Home Church. *Charity and Children* had five editors during this time: Orville Scott, Eugene Baker, Eugene White, J. D. Dennis and Charles F. Hodges.

An outstanding article was one by Mr. Dennis on the religious implications of racial injustice. *Charity and Children* went from a weekly to an every-other-week schedule in 1972, and with nearly every editor changed its format and appearance. Even as editors changed, four features persisted: Mr. Williams' "From Parson to Person", Mr. Stump's "Stumpin' It", Mr. Bailey's "Alumni News", and Mr. Terrell's "Wills and Ways".

Several long-time employees left the scene. "Miss Sallie" died in 1969, shortly before her hundredth birthday, after seventy-three years of service to the Home, her last position being that of Research Secretary. Paul Edinger retired in 1967 after forty-three years, mostly as Supervisor of Maintenance at Mills Home. Mary Drury, bookkeeper for *Charity and Children*, retired after thirty-one years. Sam Raper retired from farm work after thirty-five years, and Don Campbell after twenty, while "Doc" Baldwin, the farmer at Wall Home, retired with twenty-one years to his credit. Four of the "great" houseparents retired — Mary Hedgecock, after twenty-six years, Imogene Wilson and Mae Arnder with more than twenty, and Thelma Robertson, whose tenure had twice been

interrupted by her marriages but who returned to her boys each time she was widowed.

In 1965 the Board of Trustees was faced with the problem of whether to sign the Civil Rights compliance act that was demanded by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. This compliance was necessary for county departments of social services to be permitted to place children in their custody with the agency. The problem was a difficult one. Dr. Wagoner had, two years before, seen service to black children as one of the agency's future goals. There was real fear, shared by many private and church-supported agencies at that time, that to sign the act of compliance would endanger the agency's right to use its professional judgment in selecting those children whom it could serve. In company with a number of other homes, the Board declined to sign the compliance at first, while asserting its intention not to discriminate against children of a minority race. It offered, at this time, referral, counseling, child development, foster care, higher education services as programs it was willing to offer black children, but not, apparently, residential care on one of its major campuses. In 1967 the Board voted nine to five to sign the compliance statement. The first black children were accepted for group care at Mills Home in 1974, although bi-racial children had been cared for at Odum Home since it became a part of the Baptist Children's Homes in 1957.

In other actions, the Board voted in 1971 to increase its own size to thirty-six members. It approved a change in titles — Dr. Wagoner ceased to be General Superintendent and became President, and the President of the Board became its Chairman. It authorized the Wagoners to move off the Mills Home campus. It established a Board of Visitors to assist in interpreting the work of the agency. It also approved the discontin-

nuance of commercial printing by the print shop. Judge William York retired as the Board's attorney and was succeeded first, on an interim basis, by Olin Reed and then by Winfield Blackwell.

The agency was in an excellent financial situation. During this time the annual income more than quadrupled, from a little more than a million dollars to nearly five million. A major gift at that time was a challenge gift of \$100,000 from the Alonzo Burris Family. It came at a time when there were plans for expansion of the facilities of Greer Home, which was then renamed the Greer-Burris Home, even though it never operated as such. There were also substantial bequests, al-

though not so many as in the years to come.

As early as 1963 a drama, to be entitled "Charity and Children", was planned for the fiftieth anniversary of Kennedy Home. In 1966 this plan was postponed and a new drama, "Diamonds and Deeds" was written and enacted in 1970. In 1974 the Homes also produced a television documentary entitled "The Mountain Within". This was narrated by television personality Andy Griffith and won three national awards.

In the mid-seventies, when institutions of all kinds were being attacked on all sides, the Baptist Children's Homes was in a strong position to give leadership in the field and owed much of this to the Wagoners.

# Dr. Wagoner's Final Years: 1978-1983

In 1976 the Board of Trustees, at the request of Dr. Wagoner, established a special Trustee Evaluation Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Olin Binkley. The committee undertook an exhaustive self-study, which was completed in 1979. Three emphases are apparent in their report:

(1) A restatement of, or re-emphasis on the Christian purpose of the Homes, which, to an observer, had not been neglected over the years, but perhaps needed restatement. A particular concept that had been much stressed, particularly by Parker McLendon, was that of redemption of the child and his or her family but there was also stress laid on the "intellectual and spiritual growth of children and youth toward mature manhood and womanhood" as well of the love, compassion, and understanding required in the work.

(2) An emphasis on the historical development of the institution and the purpose for which it was established in 1885. In the life of an institution of such longevity a restatement and affirmation of purpose was in order. The statement indicates:

The mission of this institution is the care of dependent, neglected and homeless children; emotionally disturbed children; unwed mothers and their children; and the rendering of related services to their relatives. The institution is also dedicated to working with other organizations and programs, in an effort to strengthen wholesome, Christian family life throughout the State. The broad purposes of the institution embrace services directed towards the preservation, conservation and rehabilitation of families to avoid wherever possible the placement of the child away from his home. Counseling services by skilled personnel are utilized in efforts to prevent family disintegration.

(3) Concern for "an efficient and dynamic administrative organization." This, in effect meant an administrative structure which consisted of a number of Family Services Areas, six in 1982 but eight today, supervised directly by the Institution's Director of Family Services. Dr. Binkley said in 1981 that there was "a significant and growing body of evidence" that this was "an effective way to make a wider range of services more accessible to children and families who need them, increase the possibility of early detection and keeps an open

channel of communication with appropriate sources of information." This system replaced the Area Administrators, all three of whom retired, resigned or were replaced during this time. The Directors of Family Services Areas became responsible to Dr. Elizabeth Wagoner, who had just completed her doctor of ministry degree at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and who moved from Specialist in Child Development and Family Education to Director of Family Services and professional supervisor of the agency's work. While the change provided greater coverage of outlying areas of the state, it also greatly enhanced the control of the President's office, and the delivery of services.

It was at this time that the agency which had been so prominent among child care agencies in the South, appeared, to those agencies at least, to withdraw into itself. The agency had its own vision of where it was going and was much involved with the new services it was developing. It questioned the help it could receive from the sources it had used over the years to help it upgrade its basic child care program. It also made the conscious decision to provide as much of its in-service training as it could from its own resources, which had been greatly strengthened by Dr. Elizabeth Wagoner's increasing knowledge and expertise.

Whether this move resulted in a net gain or a loss to the agency, particularly in its group care program, could be debated. The fact that other agencies felt the loss of Baptist Children's Homes' leadership, and were much puzzled by it, was apparent.

The agency moved at this point with considerable dispatch. It proceeded to implement its new structure and continue to expand its services with remarkable vigor. Family Services Areas, beginning with the Charlotte Family Services Area in 1977, were established at Raleigh and Jacksonville in addition to those at the sites of the institutional campuses at Kinston, Thomasville, Pembroke and Clyde. Emergency Care was soon available in Charlotte, Henderson, Forest City, High Point and Supply. Emergency care was also offered in specialized cottages at Broyhill, Mills and Odum Homes.

Probably the most significant expansion of services came with the establishment of a full-time therapeutic camping pro-



Cameron Home Therapeutic Camp.



Wall Home — Wallburg.

gram. This was made possible by the gift by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Reed of 902 acres of woodland near Cameron, N. C., and was named in honor of John B. and T. Frank Cameron, grandfather and uncle of Mrs. Reed. The agency brought in Mr. Buford McKenzie as Director of Camping, who was most eminently qualified for this position. He had worked for eighteen years with Campbell Loughmiller, the founder of therapeutic camping, and for twelve years with the Eckerd Foundation's program in Florida. Cameron Home, as it is now called, is recognized by the State Board of Public Instruction and the Moore County Board of Education as an alternative education program. At present it cares for 30 boys, in three groups of ten, most of them having shown problematic behavior before they were placed there. The program was assisted by a \$75,000 grant from the Duke Endowment. The Frontiersman program at Kennedy was merged with this new program, but not before the boys had rafted miles down the Neuse River. Wall Home, which also offered "wilderness

training" and a program called "High Adventure" in which boys learned to survive three days in the wilderness entirely alone, was also closed during this time.

In 1982 Dr. Wagoner offered the Board some projections for the future. He foresaw all the current services being continued; an increase in the number of Family Services Areas; greater cooperation with Directors of Missions, pastors and the church leadership; an increased foster home program and emergency care facilities; the redevelopment of the Greer-Burris Home, which was never implemented with the property being sold in 1984. The earlier experience at Greer Home led to the recognition of the need for a therapeutic camping program, which was first established in 1974 at Kennedy Home. Even though Greer-Burris Home never fully developed, it did serve as a valuable catalyst for other specialized services. A number of other specialized services were projected, which included programs for children with learning disabilities; the mildly retarded; children needing security in unlocked facilities, in addition to services for violence-prone children, known in North Carolina as "Willie M's". The 1979 study also recommended a pilot program for handicapped adults. Clearly the vision here is of an agency more closely allied with the church and willing to try to meet the needs of a great variety of people. He also projected goals on other occasions, such as how many children and parents the agency would be serving by 1985, its hundredth year of operation. He foresaw 400 children on the 4 campuses, 200 in foster care, 100 in therapeutic camping, 110 in off-campus group homes and 100 daily in the Child Development Center, in addition to 2,000 adults being counseled annually through the family service centers.

This was undoubtedly visionary. The actual numbers, at the beginning of 1985, were 252 on the 4 campuses and in emergency care, 20 in foster homes and 30 in therapeutic camping. It is interesting how time and time again the agency has had high hopes for its foster family home program, and how much effort it has put in trying to develop this kind of care. There were Foster Parents' Days, workshops for foster parents, efforts to stimulate recruiting, social workers assigned exclusively to this program: numerically the desired potential was not reached. There has been competition from county departments of social services, but more and more of the children the Homes are now accepting are too troubled or too wary of close relationships with a new family to be successful as foster children. This in no way denigrates the devoted service that some foster parents have given. Not all of Dr. Wagoner's dreams have been realized, but his goals exemplify

the kind of extensive services on which the agency had set its eyes.

Building also continued during this third phase of the Waggoner administration, although not quite as fast as before. The most impressive structure was the W. R. and Elizabeth Waggoner Family Resource Center on the Mills Home campus, with its classrooms and motel-like units. It stands where Miles-Durham and Woman's Building used to be located. Few children's homes can boast of a similar facility. It was built from the proceeds of the bequests of William R. and Minnie Frazier; C. Howard and Corrie T. Grant; and Eddie T. and Bessie Cain Whilden. It is used by study groups from all over the state. It houses the Olin and Pauline Binkley Library and the Lexie Williamson Collection. Its present host and hostess are Bill and Louise Sisk.



W. R. and Elizabeth Waggoner Family Resource Center — Thomasville.

A special appeal for Odum Home resulted in the building of the Sara Catherine Deal Recreational Building, two cottages, the Indian Memorial Cottage and the Latta-Harnett County Cottage, used as an emergency care center, as well as a Director's residence on that campus. In 1977 the Frizzell-Higdon Cottage was built on the Broyhill Home campus. In 1980 the Alumni Association undertook a project to build an amphitheater to seat 150 on the Mills Home campus, as well as to convert Mitchell Cottage into a historical museum. The amphitheater was completed the next year and named after Miles Lee and Eric Williams Cass.

There was also the bequest of the Hubert Craig family of a cottage at Ridgecrest, which gave the Homes a second recreational facility. It is somehow fitting that the Homes should have one "summer home" by the seashore and one in the mountains. The valuable Moody property in Macon County was given by May Beryl and Nora Moody in 1980.

A number of new appointments had to be made, especially with the development of Family Services Areas. Phillip R. Morrow, Sr., was appointed Family Services Director in Charlotte in 1977, later moved to Thomasville as assistant to



Sara Catherine Deal Recreational Building — Odum Home.



Indian Memorial Cottage — Odum Home.



Latta-Harnett Cottage — Odum Home.



Craig Cottage — Ridgecrest.



Phillip R. Morrow, Sr.



Charles F. Hodges.

Dr. Elizabeth Wagoner, and just before her retirement in 1983 was appointed to succeed her. Steve Hoffman succeeded Mr. Morrow in Charlotte. Bill Morrow worked first under Earl Haynes as Resident Director at Kennedy Home but later became both Resident and Family Services Director in the Kinston Area. Luther Osment became Family Services Director in Western North Carolina, with Tom Roberts as Resident Director of Broyhill Home. Larry Sawyer, who had been a social worker first in the Fayetteville Area, went to Pembroke as Director of Odum Home and later Family Services Director and then to the same position in Thomasville. The husband and wife team of Gene and Mary Alice Wilson became resident directors at Mills Home. Melvin Brown followed Mr. Sawyer at Pembroke, and in 1982 Darrell Garner was named as the Pembroke Area Family Services Director. Leonard Gerald became the director of the Raleigh Family Services Area and Burnie Collins was appointed to the same position for the Coastal area headquartered in Jacksonville. Henry Morgan became the pastor at Kennedy Home. Charles Hodges was editor of *Charity and Children* until 1982, but at the same time was the first interim Director of Family Services at Thomasville and Assistant to the President. He was succeeded as editor by Richard L. Thorne on an interim basis, and later by Rick Stegall in 1983. Hodges later resigned in November, 1982, to enter private business. William G. Springs was listed as Director of Psychological Services, perhaps a reflection of the increasing difficulty of some of the children's problems.

As had been mentioned there were changes in the administration of Mills, Kennedy, Odum, and Broyhill Homes. Roger Williams retired after twenty-four years as pastor, Director of Development and Superintendent of Kennedy Home.

Melvin Walker resigned to take other work in 1980. Hugh Starnes was replaced at Broyhill Home, worked for a year as Director of Special Services in Western North Carolina and then took a position with the Baptist Retirement Homes of North Carolina. Charles Bennett joined the staff of the Florida Baptist Children's Homes. From the social work ranks Horace Hawes took over the reins of the Bethea Home in Darlington, South Carolina, and Charlotte Lloyd resigned from Mills Home.

Other retirements during this time were of Miss Estelle Crouch, doyenne of the childcare worker staff at Mills Home, after thirty-one years at Hutchinson Cottage, and her co-worker, Lugenia Pinnix, after twenty-one; Vivian Lopp, bookkeeper, with twenty-seven years of service; Chris Marlowe, twenty-six years with *Charity and Children*; Oleta Bunting who worked on church records for twenty-two years; and Mrs. Rae Brock, after twenty years at Kennedy Home. The Homes and their alumni were also much saddened by the death of Franklin Bailey, at the comparatively early age of sixty-two. But the retiree with the longest association with the Homes was Miss Swannie McHargue, who had been part of the Mills Home community for fifty-three years as student and staff member.

The staff almost numbered 300. Four of them received special recognition from the North Carolina Child Care Association. Robert Stump was first Secretary/Treasurer, Vice President, and later President of that body in 1980-81. In 1980 Robert and Marie Knowles were honored as Child Care Workers of the Year, and Horace Hawes as the Social Worker. In 1983 Linda Morgan was chosen as Child Care Support Worker of the Year. In 1979 Dr. Binkley received that organization's premier honor, the Alan Keith-Lucas Friend of Children Award.

Financially the Homes' receipts were over \$6.4 million in 1983, despite the elimination by the Convention in 1978 of the Thanksgiving Offering, which had at one point supplied thirty percent of the Homes' needs. There were a number of major bequests, the largest being those of W. S. and Hattie Briant, of more than \$1.4 million, Bessie C. Whilden, more than \$350,000 and Minnie Reddish, a large ongoing trust. Other bequests of more than \$100,000 apiece came from the estates of Roella Witherspoon, T. K. Sutton, and Mr. and Mrs. M. R. Thomas. There were also nine others of more than \$50,000. In 1980 three well-wishers, J. E. Collet, Z. D. Hoots and David S. Clay became trustees for the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina Foundation, Incorporated. In the same year Donald Myers, an alumnus, began the Louise L.



Map showing Family Services Areas.

Blake Foundation to help exceptional children, a rare accolade for a social worker.

The Board continued functioning under its rotating chairmen. It has yet to elect a woman to that post. Dr. Olin Binkley and Carroll Wall, Jr., each completed twenty years of Board service. It was still primarily a Board of prominent businessmen, with only three or four ministers and about the same number of lawyers and physicians.

Two more media presentations were produced, a historical drama written by Elizabeth Wagoner in 1977, and a film, "You Needed Me," in 1982.

In September, 1982, Dr. Wagoner informed the Board of his wish to retire on or before July 1, 1983, at which time he would have served a full twenty-five years. A Search Committee was established, with Dr. Binkley as chairman, to recommend a successor. Unfortunately there developed a gap in communication between this committee and the Wagoners, which caused Dr. Wagoner and his successor not to meet until after the new administration was in place. The Wagoners also declined to work as consultants to the Homes, he on financial affairs and she in child development. This was a rather sad note on which to end twenty-five years of outstanding and devoted service.

Dr. Wagoner had come to an agency with essentially two placement services, residential and foster family care, concentrated for the most part in two areas of the state. He had diversified its services, adding day care, family counseling, maternity homes services, emergency care, therapeutic camping, and for a while, residential treatment. The Homes had

truly become a multi-function agency seeking to meet the needs of families throughout the state. He had brought its services closer to the people and especially the church's pastors and directors of missions, geographically and psychologically. He had built one new campus, and practically rebuilt the three he had inherited. Nineteen of the twenty-seven cottages now in use were built in his administration. He had increased the Homes' income eightfold, and tripled the number of its staff. He was both a visionary and a very practical man, with a fine admixture of conservative principles and progressive views on family and child care. It was entirely fitting that Wake Forest University should confer on him the Doctor of Divinity degree — he had previously received their Distinguished Alumni Award — and that he should have been named, in 1983, by the North Carolina Child Care Association, as co-winner of the Alan Keith-Lucas Friend of Children Award.



Dr. W. R. Wagoner and friends.

## Dr. Blackwell and the Future



Dr. Michael C. Blackwell, Eighth Administrator, President, 1983- .

It could not have been an easy job to find a man to succeed Dr. Wagoner. Child care agencies tend to be in many ways reflections of the philosophy and administrative style of their executives. The Board, at this time, obviously looked for a man who would be an able administrator and one who could communicate to the Baptist constituency and the world at large the program of the Baptist Children's Homes. Baptists have a tradition of entrusting their child care programs to men of stature and wisdom, and in this case they found a man who appeared to have ideal qualifications for the job.

Dr. Michael C. Blackwell combines in one person several very important skills. His undergraduate degree, from the University of North Carolina, was in journalism. He early put his skill to work both on the *Durham Morning Herald*, where

he covered county government and health affairs, and as news director of station WAYS in Charlotte.

After three years in the media he had decided to enter the ministry, and earned three theological degrees, the Master of Divinity, Master of Theology, and the Doctor of Ministry from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary at Wake Forest, as well as taking post-graduate work at Union Theological Seminary at New York. He was involved in postgraduate work at the Babcock Graduate School of Management at Wake Forest University and the University of Richmond's School of Business. He then enrolled in the Executive Program of the University of North Carolina School of Business Administration, from which he graduated in February, 1985, after he had become the President of the Baptist Children's Homes.

Dr. Blackwell has served on numerous boards and committees, including the Business Management Committee of the Baptist General Board. He contributed a chapter on "The Pastor as Administrator" to a book on small church management. He had served three churches in North Carolina and Virginia, beginning his pastoral work as Minister of Youth-Education and Associate Pastor of Ridge Road Baptist Church in Raleigh. He then served seven years as pastor of First Church, Carthage, North Carolina. At the time of his appointment as President he was pastor of the Monument Heights Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia. Dr. Binkley said of him that he had "a rare combination of theological insight and professional skill."

Reared in Gastonia, North Carolina, he was forty-one years old, at the time of his election, married and the father of two children, Julie, born in 1970, and Michael, Jr., born in 1973. His wife is the former Catherine Kanipe of Charlotte. Dr. Blackwell assumed the presidency on July 1, 1983. He may be expected to serve the Homes for two decades at the very least.

As might be expected the initial impact — and it must be remembered that at the time of this writing Dr. Blackwell has only been at the helm for twenty months — has been in the areas of improved communication, staff training, developing financial resources, accountability, job definition, and enhancing the image of the agency. Dr. Blackwell has described this period as one of "gearing up" for the Centennial Celebration



The Blackwell Family — Julie, Dr. and Mrs. Blackwell, and Michael, Jr.

and "reorganizing" the staff to "take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Leaving aside for the moment the Centennial itself, it is remarkable how much has been done that will have long-term results on the agency's operation. Among many improvements that have occurred, and perhaps the most significant administratively, have been the publication of a massive Services-Procedures Manual, the writing of the child care worker and social worker orientation course, the upgrading of the computer system, including the plan to link all Family Services Areas by computer, and the expansion and reorganization of the Development Department. This department now includes the Director of Development, the Managing Editor of *Charity and Children*, a Director of Special Gifts, a Director of Planned Giving, one of Church and Community Relations, one of Donor Records and Research, as well as, temporarily, a Director of Centennial Celebration. The administrative staff has also taken several management training courses. There were meetings in each of the eight family services areas in 1984 to acquaint professional groups with Baptist Children's Homes' services. Four such meetings were held in 1985.

In the program area there have also been developments. An eighth Family Services Area was opened in the Hickory-Lenoir area and a social work center, the nucleus of a ninth, at Williamston. Donna Lail, with a long tenure as a social worker was named in October, 1984, the Director of the Hickory-Lenoir Family Services Area. The Child Development Center began a program for Toddlers (one to two year



Development Department Staff: (left to right) Wayne Drumheller, Marianna Boucher, Charles Tanner, Rick Stegall, Bill Crouch, Jane Hill, Beth Wilborne, and Lou Russell.



Directors of Family Services: (left to right, front to back) Steve Hoffman, Dr. Blackwell, Phillip Morrow, Luther Osment, Donna Lail, Burnie Collins, Leonard Gerald, Darrell Garner, Larry Sawyer, and Bill Morrow.

olds) in August of 1984 and has received a grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the first it has ever made to the Homes, to start an Infant Program in 1985. Wall Cottage at Broyhill Home, along with Craver Cottage on the Mills Home campus have been given a special function to help youngsters learn the skills they will need when they become independent. Ferebee Cottage at Kennedy Home has become the ninth Emergency Care facility. The Homes have also undertaken the development of a new service — Moody Farm Ministries — through a new cottage to be built on the property left them in Macon County by the generosity of two sisters, May Beryl and Nora Moody. This cottage is to become a specialized one for the care of emotionally neglected and abused children.

The Moody property comprises 300 acres, and will also be used for recreational camping. Future plans include another cottage and additional child care units. A \$500,000 campaign was launched in 1984 much after the pattern of that which established Broyhill Home, and was headed by a Franklin pastor, Lloyd Fish, Jr. Ground was broken for the first phase of Moody Ministries on February 24, 1985.



Moody Ministries Groundbreaking, February 24, 1985: (left to right) Lloyd Fish, general director of campaign; Matthew Reynolds, who raised money by selling eggs; Nora Moody, who helped to make the gift possible; and Dr. Michael C. Blackwell.

In other moves Bill Springs, the Psychological Consultant, extended his services statewide. Robert Stump developed an orientation course for child care staff and social workers and conducted a number of workshops on discipline and other matters. This writer was also asked to give twelve days of his time to staff training in 1985.

Construction during Dr. Blackwell's first twenty months has included additions to the Maternity Home and to the administration building at Broyhill Home, a new storage facility at Broyhill, the conversion of an unused structure to a new administration building at Kennedy Home, the renovation of several cottages and the demolition of one old landmark cottage, "W.C.," on the Mills Home campus, and complete renovation of administrative facilities at Odum Home. Plans are underway, as part of the Centennial Celebration, for the completion of the renovation of Mitchell Cottage as a museum and a symbol of 100 years of service. The old infirmary building on the Mills Home campus will be renovated into ex-



Coordinator of Social Work Staff: (left to right) Mary Ellen Walker, Robert R. Stump, and Emily G. Walker.

panded headquarters for the Development Department.

The accomplishments in these three areas is all the more remarkable considering that the Homes were undergoing a period of financial stringency, were engaged in an austerity program, and faced an anticipated deficit of \$500,000 in its operating budget in 1984, a shortfall it eventually managed to reduce to \$117,000. The budget for 1985 falls only a fraction short of seven million dollars.



Business Office Staff: (left to right) Peggy Hill, Betsy Armfield, Doris Wilson, Robert Saunders, Lynda Stone, Ron Richardson, Orilee Evington, F. T. Bowman, Lynda Ballard, Sam Barefoot.

The Centennial celebrations will already have begun by the time that this book is published. The celebration plans include this book, a twenty-minute video tape, a musical to be presented in local churches, a 1,478-mile "Run for the Children" linking the locations where the Baptist Children's Homes has

facilities. Also a statewide Art, Photography, and Craft Festival, the burial of a time capsule to mark the beginning of a second century of service, dinners throughout the state to be hosted by members of the Board of Trustees, a Roadrun and Funwalk through the city of Thomasville, a program at the Baptist State Convention, special programs at Thanksgiving and Christmas, and a special bear costume, underwritten by Mrs. Pat Ray, are planned. The bear, to appear at numerous functions, is named "BC," and is the official mascot of the Homes. There are also centennial commemorative



B. C. and Child Development Center children.

mugs, a centennial cookbook, and hundreds of T-shirts. Wayne Drumheller is on special assignment to direct the centennial celebration. The musical, entitled "Praisebook: Music For a Celebration," was composed by Philip Young, Minister of Music in the First Baptist Church of Henderson, North Carolina. The videotape, "100 Years of Caring," was produced by the Communication Department of the Baptist State Convention under the direction of Frances Riley, of that department, and Charles L. Tanner of the Homes. Dr. Blackwell served as on-camera narrator/host for the new video. Funds for the videotape, the cookbook, and this volume were provided by the Broyhill Foundation.

There was only one change in the administrative ranks, W. Isaac Terrell resigning after sixteen years as Director of Development and one as Director of Planned Giving to form his own consultant firm. He was replaced by Dr. William H. Crouch, Jr. Elsewhere several persons completed twenty years or more of employment: at Kennedy Home William Graham (44) and Odell White (36) of the farm, and William E. Walker

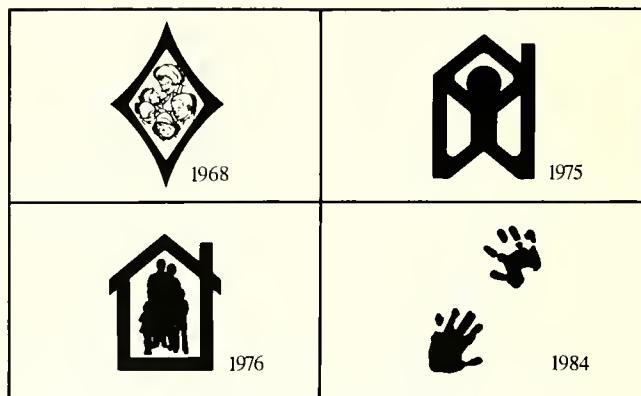


Dr. William H. Crouch, Jr.

(36) of the food locker, and at Mills Home Willard Myers (32), maintenance supervisor, Helen Pearson (31), dietitian, Horace Reid (26), plumber, Priscilla Burton (23), secretary, and Bill Sisk (34), manager of Family Resource Center; and on the general administrative staff, Thurston Bowman (23), treasurer, and Robert R. Stump (21), coordinator of social work.

Several gifts and bequests were received. A very important gift was the acreage that provides Kennedy Home a frontage on U.S. 70, given by Mr. and Mrs. Shade Aldridge and Mr. and Mrs. Bailey Barrow. Calvin M. Little of Mt. Gilead left the Homes in excess of \$140,000 and there were four other bequests of more than \$50,000 each.

In other happenings, the Homes adopted a new logo, the imprint of a child's hands. This replaced the one of a family standing on the porch of a home. At the same time the Board



Institution's logos

of Trustees' Committee on Personnel Policy and Public Agency raised some substantive questions about the need for further study of treatment and diagnostic services, and of the supervisory process. They also asked for clearer statements on discipline and sex education. Their number one recommendation was, however, to reduce the number of dual sex group care cottages. These recommendations reflect a concern with the behavior of older, more difficult children who comprised the majority of those accepted today and, in Dr. Blackwell's own words, a recognition that "we must continue to have a spiritual influence on the children for we have no other reason for existence."

The question of what kinds of programs Baptist Children's Homes should undertake in the future, and what children and families they might serve, is addressed most forthrightly and scientifically by Dr. Blackwell in a fifty-eight-page "Proposal for Long-Range Planning" which he presented to the Board of Trustees in January, 1985. He gives a short history of the institution and then faces squarely the present situation. The country has been in the throes of an anti-institutional wave since 1975. The concept of permanency planning, and particularly Public Law 96-272, which governs the federal funds

available to public child welfare agencies, establishes children's institutions, especially the larger ones, as the least desirable form of placement — to be used only as a last resort. This is already resulting in less use of child care institutions by departments of social services. At the moment, forty-six percent of the children in group care are in the custody of departments of social services and twenty-one percent of the agency's income is derived from purchase-of-care and other governmental sources, as contrasted with thirty-eight percent from identifiable Baptist sources.

Using the computer's ability to extrapolate from the experience of the past five years, Dr. Blackwell shows that if present trends continue the number of children in group care will be about half what it was in 1985 by 1990, and that placements from public agency sources will virtually cease to exist.

It should be noted, however, that this projection assumes that the group care offered will be of the same sort as it is today. This is of a rather generalized nature and stresses, in the Homes' publicity at least, "family-like" living with perhaps some emphasis on amelioration of behavior. "Family Atmosphere is What Group Care Cottage Life is All About," said a 1984 headline in *Charity and Children*. This image, which stresses the very factors that other forms of care provide more directly, is scarcely marketable today. On the other hand specialized services that use group facilities, such as residential treatment, clarification of family plans, partial parenting of children with special needs, preparation for independence, and other innovative services may help to reverse this trend. As Dr. Binkley said, at his final Board meeting in September, 1984, there will always be a need for group care. The trend to private placements rather than those referred by a public agency offers the agency a golden opportunity to develop purposeful and specialized uses of its facilities.

Dr. Blackwell's extrapolations show the foster family care program diminishing still further. Emergency care is likely to show a modest increase, despite the fact that Baptist Children's Homes now offers emergency care at nine locations, in addition to the fact that six other child care institutions and some departments of social services are developing their own facilities. Emergency care is in itself a specialized use of group care. Maternity care is likely to experience little change. The one program offered at present that is likely to show some growth is therapeutic camping. It is a specialized service using group care concepts, although not in conventional group care facilities. A key concept is utilizing the influence of the group and its non-family structure.



Donna Myers, Assistant Computer Manager, and Larry Beaman, Director of Computer Services.



Dr. Michael C. Blackwell and Catherine Higgins, Administrative Secretary since 1967.

The proposal calls for a long-range plan to be developed during 1986 and to be completed within two years. In the meantime, Dr. Blackwell offers thirty recommendations for 1985 and 1986. Seven of these have to do with program and

the use of facilities, five each with the Centennial and with increasing the agency's sources of support, four deal with the planning process itself and administrative communication, two each with personnel matters and building operations, and one to increasing the quality of *Charity and Children*, which is now a twelve-page monthly publication, utilizing color photography and edited by Marianna Boucher, the first female managing editor since the paper was founded on July 14, 1887. Many of these have been reported earlier in this chapter but seen cumulatively they are impressive. One not mentioned previously is a "priority" concern to raise the salaries of child care workers.

The study involved in the development of the new long-range plan will be the most scientific that Baptist Children's Homes has ever experienced. It will also be conditioned by the traditions of the agency, new concepts in child care, changing conditions for children, youth, and their families in our society, but, above all, by the Christian purpose of the whole endeavor. It will, as Dr. Blackwell has said, need God's guidance. Baptist Children's Homes enters its second century of service at a difficult time, and one that calls for many decisions, but it has many strengths to fit it for its task. It has a glorious history, a fine reputation, the support of thousands of Baptists, generous donors, good facilities, a loyal alumni, a dedicated, hardworking, and compassionate staff, wise leadership, both in its Board and in its Executive, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to rely on.

The future would seem to be full of hope.



Dr. Michael C. Blackwell and friends.

**APPENDIX****I. Presidents or Chairmen of the Board of Trustees  
(Year of Election)**

1885	John Watson*	1966	D. E. Ward
1888	John Mitchell	1967	Raymond A. Stone
1907	W. R. Gwaltney	1968	Carroll C. Wall, Jr.
1908	F. B. Hodgood	1969	Olin T. Binkley
1925	E. F. Aydlett	1971	Don Bryant
1927	B. W. Spilman	1972	Raymond A. Stone
1941	Zeno B. Wall	1975	Olin T. Binkley
1948	I. G. Greer	1976	Carroll C. Wall, Jr.
1952	H. C. Philpott	1977	Raymond A. Stone
1955	Charles Powell	1978	William H. Brown
1956	I. G. Greer	1980	Carroll C. Wall, Jr.
1957	H. C. Philpott	1981	Hubert J. Philpott
1959	John T. Wayland	1982	William H. Brown
1961	J. C. Conrad	1984	Carroll C. Wall, Jr.
1963	Olin T. Binkley	1985	Carroll C. Wall, Jr.
1965	Carroll C. Wall, Jr.		

—  
\*Chairman of the Baptist Orphanage Association

## II. Number Of Children In Residential Care Programs, Selected Years, End Of Year

Year	Total	Mills Home	Kennedy Home	Odum Home	Broyhill Home	Greer Home	Group Homes*	Therapeutic Camping	Foster Homes
1887	58	58	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1890	110	110	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1894	133	133	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1900	183	183	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1905	307	307	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1911	383	383	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1916	500	450	50	—	—	—	—	—	—
1925	602	492	110	—	—	—	—	—	—
1930	630	494	136	—	—	—	—	—	—
1937	596	460	136	—	—	—	—	—	—
1942	582	422	132	—	—	—	—	—	28
1946	587	401	134	—	—	—	—	—	52**
1951	634	371	167	—	—	—	—	—	96**
1959	632	273	146	16	—	—	—	—	197***
1965	548	266	135	22	—	7	—	—	118
1970	495	263	119	15	—	5	11	—	82
1973	450	194	119	15	39	—	11	—	64
1976	399	139	106	20	37	—	11	16	55
1979	402	140	105	21	47	—	27	16	46
1984	313	102	70	13	34	—	46	28	20

\*Includes Wall, Maternity, and Emergency Homes.

\*\*Approximate

\*\*\*Actually figure for 1958; peak of the program.

**III. Income from All Sources, Selected Years**

Year	Amount	Year	Amount
1886	2,000	1943	357,000
1896	9,000	1945	483,000
1905	36,000	1950	595,000
1911	52,000	1959	807,000
1916	102,000	1964	1,033,000
1920	265,000	1972	2,057,000
1925	200,000	1975	3,119,000
1931	199,000	1979	5,028,000
1933	170,000	1983	6,442,000
1939	201,000	1984	6,340,000

**IV. Alumni of the Baptist Homes  
Who Gave Their Lives for Their Country****World War I**

William M. Basemore  
Charles C. Cook  
Arthur Howell  
Adlai Stevenson

**World War II**

Clifton Benton  
Virgil Briles  
Morris Eggers  
Charles E. Gallimore  
Edgar J. Greene  
Alfred Haire  
Lucian Malpass  
James B. Norville  
Clyde V. Owen  
William D. Ross  
Wilbur L. Spaul  
Bennie Thomas

**Vietnam War**

Peter W. Fields



#### INTO THE NEXT CENTURY

On May 28, 1985 the Centennial Run For The Children began on the Mills Home campus in Thomasville. Dr. Blackwell holds aloft a Baton which contained a copy of the record of Mary Presson, the first child admitted to The Baptist Childrens Home on November 11, 1885. The 1488 miles run took 40 days to complete and went through 155 North Carolina communities. It ended in Thomasville on July 6, 1985.

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